

F.O.

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Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. August 1900.

CONFIDENTIAL.

(1380.)

Part I.

CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

AFFAIRS AT KOWEIT.

1896-99.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Correspondence respecting Affairs at Koweit.

PART 1.

No. 1.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received July 13.)

(No. 526.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 6, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Memorandum which has been drawn up by Mr. Stavrides, legal Adviser to this Embassy, on the subject of an incident which recently occurred at Koweit, a port in the Persian Gulf, near Bassorah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum by Mr. Stavrides.

I HAVE just received information from a trustworthy source in connection with an incident which took place in the port of Koweit, in the Persian Gulf, which much disturbed and occupied the Palace within these last days. In supplying this information, I considered that it might be useful to preface it with a geographical-historical summary of the said country. Koweit, as you are probably aware, is a port of Arabia, near Bassorah. Its soil is sandy and without any culture. The population of the town amounts to 50,000 souls. Its inhabitants are fishermen, generally both for fish and pearls in the waters of Bahrein and Katar. Their trade is limited only to India, where they go and come in their boats. The Province of Koweit, which depends upon the Governor of this town, is inhabited by nomads, who are shepherds, and who can supply 100,000 warriors. The people of the town possess Martini rifles, but those of the interior old-fashioned weapons and rifles. The governing family's name is Sabah, which is a branch of the family Entbé, which reigns at Bahrein, and of which the reigning branch is named Khalifa. The title of the family in question is Sheikh. The country of Koweit, although entirely independent, figures in the maps as being a part of the Ottoman Empire; the reigning family possesses large landed property at Bassorah, and especially at Fao, which belongs to them—that is the reason why the Sheikhs accept their investiture, sanctioned by the Sultan, who grants them the rank of Kaimakam, with the title of Pasha, of which the Sheikh does not deign to make use.

The reigning family was composed of four brothers, one of whom, named Abdullah, died some time ago. His brother Mohammed succeeded him in the Government of Koweit, and according to custom his juniors, Jarrah and Monbarec, assisted him in the exercise of his powers. Lately the two brothers, Mohammed and Jarrah, have been assassinated. The Palace received the information that Monbarec, after a month's residence at Bushire, kept by Her Majesty's Consul, Mr. Wilson, on his return killed his brothers, because they objected to an alliance with the Emir Muhammed Ibu-el-Rachid, Sheikh of Chamar and Suzerain of Nejd,

and with Jacem-ul-Thane, Sheikh of the tribes round Katar (town in the possession of the Turks, and depending on the Matessarif of Lahasa or Nejd, according to the Turks), and who some time ago massacred the Turkish garrison of Lahasa, and maintains his independence since.

According to the opinion of the Palace, this plan of alliance was suggested to Monbarec by the English Resident at Bushire, and that the object of such an alliance would be an Arabic confederation, in which the Principality of Bahrein would be comprised.

The Palace unwilling, under the present circumstances, to cause a new complication to arise, decided to ignore the case of the assassination, and intends to grant to Monbarec the usual investiture, and orders to this effect have been dispatched to the Governor-General of Bussorah, instructing him to avoid all shedding of blood.

June 30, 1896.

No. 2.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 25.)

Sir,

India Office, March 24, 1897.

With reference to paragraph 3 of my letter of the 4th February last, I am desired by Lord George Hamilton to forward herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of Secret letter from the Government of India, dated the 24th February last, and inclosures, in reference to the suggestion that both the Turkish and the Persian Governments should be called upon to make redress and to pay indemnity for the piratical attack made on the Indian baghla "Haripasa" on the 19th September, 1895, at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab.

2. Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah states that the Sheikh of Koweit and Sheikh Mihal, the Governor of Mohammerah, are in a position to denounce the guilty parties, and in determining the question whether the Turkish and Persian Governments shall respectively be held responsible for these two officials the position of the Sheikh of Koweit must be considered.

3. Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has expressed the opinion that the Koweit Chief is in reality an independent potentate and only nominally subject to the Sultan of Turkey. On the other hand, it appears from the report of Captain Baker, of Her Majesty's ship "Sphinx," that the Turks exercise considerable influence over the Sheikh, and that so recently as August, 1896, the Turkish flag was flying at Koweit.

4. It must be remembered that the attack on the "Haripasa" occurred as far back as September 1895, and the policy, as well as the practical results, of claiming any indemnity from the Turkish Government have to be considered. If the Marquess of Salisbury is disposed to recognize Turkish sovereignty at Koweit, it appears to Lord George Hamilton that a demand for an indemnity for the losses sustained on that occasion should be preferred; but if the Sheikh of Koweit is to be treated as independent, it might suffice to convey to him a serious warning, and inform him that his responsibility will be enforced if his subjects are not restrained from repeating such attacks upon British-Indian baghlas in future.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 2.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Secret.)

My Lord,

Fort William, February 24, 1897.

YOUR Lordship's Secret despatch, dated the 18th December, 1896, invited our observations on certain correspondence relating to the alleged connection of the Sheikh of Koweit with blackmailing of ships on the Shat-el-Arab. We inclose, for your Lordship's information, copies of two letters from our Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, giving cover to communications addressed by him to Her

Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran. The later of the two has special reference to paragraph 7 of the Report by the Consul at Bussorah, dated the 20th October, 1896.* We have not received the earlier correspondence to which Colonel Wilson refers in his letter of the 10th October, 1896, to Sir Mortimer Durand, and we are not aware what action, if any, has been taken by Sir Mortimer Durand upon Colonel Wilson's suggestion that the redress and indemnity should be demanded from both the Persian and Turkish Governments. It appears to us that there might be advantage in fixing upon the Turkish Government the responsibility for the Sheikh of Koweit's actions. A state of affairs in which he can shelter himself under a nominal suggestion to the Porte while the Porte can disclaim, at will, any responsibility is in the last degree unsatisfactory. Captain Baker, of Her Majesty's ship "Sphinx," described the position, in August 1896,† thus:—

"Koweit is nominally an independent Arab territory, but in reality the Turks exercise great influence over it, more especially since the new Chief acceded to power, he finds it necessary to play into their hands. I paid him a visit, but he would not come off to the ship. I also noticed that he flew the Turkish flag and taxed him with it, but could not get any satisfactory answer from him."

We are not, however, aware of the further considerations which render this course, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Ambassador, impractical, and we can only leave the matter, with these remarks, to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

2. Colonel Wilson wrote in his diary, under date the 28th November, 1896, "it is reported that one of the pirates concerned in the attack on the 'Haripasa' has been arrested, and three other arrests are impending." No further information has been received.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

ELGIN.

G. S. WHITE.

J. WESTLAND.

J. WOODBURN.

M. D. CHALMERS.

E. H. H. COLLEN.

A. C. TREVOR.

Inclosure 2 in No. 2.

Colonel Wilson to Government of India.

Shiraz, October 10, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of my report to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran on the measures which have been concerted by Captain Whyte and Mr. Butcher, Her Majesty's Consul and Vice-Consul at Bussorah and Mohammerah, with the Turkish and Persian authorities, for the prevention of piracy on the Shat-el-Arab.

Inclosure 3 in No. 2.

Colonel Wilson to Sir M. Durand.

Shiraz, October 10, 1896.

IN continuation of correspondence ending with my letter of the 9th May, I have the honour to forward, for your Excellency's information, copy of the correspondence relating to the co-operative measures adopted by the Turkish and Persian authorities on both banks of the Shat-el-Arab, for the prevention of piracy, at the instance of Her Majesty's Consular Representatives at Bussorah and Mohammerah.

In the case of the attack on the Indian vessel "Haripasa" in September, 1895, the Turks and Persians each endeavoured to throw the responsibility on the other. This was inevitable; it is quite possible that the dangerous characters

* Sub-inclosure 2 in Inclosure 2 to despatch under reply.

† Inclosure in Political Secretary's letter, dated October 23, 1896.

among the Arabs of both banks have relations with each other, and there were no means of establishing a case definitely against either. Joint action by the authorities on both sides was therefore necessary to effectively guard against a recurrence of piracy, and this has been secured, as will be seen from the inclosed correspondence, by the efforts of Captain Whyte and Mr. Butcher.

I trust that the measures adopted may secure the safety of the river during the present date trade season when many Indian vessels resort to Mohammerah.

Inclosure 4 in No. 2.

Captain Whyte to Colonel Wilson.

Bussorah, August 6, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your information, the accompanying copy of a letter which I have addressed to the Political Resident in Turkish Arabia on the subject of the measures which the Turkish and Persian authorities are about to take during the forthcoming date season for the protection of sailing-vessels navigating the Shat-el-Arab.

2. You will remember that the piratical attack on the British-Indian baghla "Haripasa," referred to in my letter, took place at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab, and you will observe that the present protective measures are confined to the river only. The question as to whether special protection should also be arranged for at and beyond the river's mouth will doubtless receive your consideration.

I would in conclusion invite your especial attention to the friendly spirit in which the representations of Mr. Butcher and myself were met by his Excellency the Muezzin-Sultaneh, and to the active co-operation in the matter which he has promised.

Inclosure 5 in No. 2.

Captain Whyte to the Political Resident in Turkish Arabia.

Bussorah, August 3, 1896.

YOU are aware that during the date season of last year piratical attacks on sailing-vessels navigating the Shat-el-Arab were of frequent occurrence.

2. It was stated in some of the Indian newspapers, in the "Times of India" among others, on what authority I have not been able to ascertain, that in many instances Nakhodas of British Indian baghlas who were in the habit of coming to Mohammerah and Bussorah for cargoes of dates, and who had started for their destination, alarmed at the accounts which reached them of the dangerous state of the Shat-el-Arab returned to Bombay or Kurrachee without venturing to enter the river.

3. I have not omitted to bear these facts in mind, and have on more than one occasion intimated to his Excellency the Wali that, in view of the piracies committed last year, I would expect him to adopt special measures for the protection of sailing-vessels flying the British flag.

4. I am glad to be able to report that his Excellency Hamdi Pasha has met my representations in a friendly spirit, and at two recent interviews he detailed for my information the special measures which he had in view.

5. At the first of these interviews his Excellency stated that he had not definitely decided on the exact nature of the action to be taken. He intended, however, to establish a system of night boat patrols, and he had also under consideration the advisability of patrolling the river with an armed steam-launch, but pointed out that however perfect the arrangements on the Turkish bank of the river might be, there could be no really efficient protection for sailing-vessels unless similar steps were taken by the Persian authorities.

6. I readily admitted the justice of this remark, and replied that I would take an early opportunity of waiting on Sheikh Mizal, the Governor of Mohammerah, with whom I was on terms of friendship, and that I would endeavour, with the assistance of Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul to secure his active co-operation.

7. I accordingly proceeded to Mohammerah and visited the Sheikh, in company with Mr. Butcher. Our interview was of a most satisfactory nature, Sheikh Mizal affirming that he was glad to learn that concerted measures against the pirates were proposed, and assuring us that we should have nothing to complain of his arrangements.

8. There were, he stated, a certain number of Arab villages on the Persian bank of the river, and he proposed to select the three most suitable, both on account of their size and of the anchorage in their vicinity for the establishment of armed posts. Between these posts large boats, each containing from twenty-five to thirty armed men, would patrol throughout the night. The Sheikh or Headmen of the villages would, moreover, receive the strictest orders to arrange for the protection of baghlas anchoring in their neighbourhood, and would be warned that they would be held responsible for their safety.

9. I expressed myself as entirely satisfied with the Sheikh's proposals, which, if efficiently carried out, would not fail to make piracy a dangerous occupation. I inquired, however, whether there would be any objection to my visiting the villages in which the armed posts were to be established, explaining that a British Consular Agent would in all probability be appointed shortly at Fao, and that it was important for me to know exactly where these villages were situated. It would be possible, I hoped, for the Consular Agent to communicate with the Nakhodas of British-Indian sailing-vessels bound for Mohammerah, and he would be instructed to inform them that their safety at night could only be guaranteed if they anchored in the neighbourhood of the villages in question. They would further be advised to report their arrival to the Sheikh or Headman of the village off which they stopped and to claim his protection.

10. The Sheikh replied that so far from objecting to my suggestion he would, if I desired, himself accompany me, and it was arranged before my departure that as soon as his preparations were complete we should proceed together to the villages fixed upon.

11. On my return to Bussorah I again visited his Excellency Hamdi Pasha and informed him of the result of my interview with Sheikh Mizal. His Excellency agreed with me in regarding the steps about to be taken by the Sheikh as very satisfactory and stated that he had, during my absence, consulted with his Chief of Police and that they were both of opinion that a cordon of armed posts with boat patrols, established at short distances from each other, would be the most effective method of coping with the pirates. He had consequently given orders for the formation of seven such posts between Fao and Bussorah at the places marginally noted* and a half company of soldiers would be specially detailed for this service under the command of two Lieutenants.

12. On taking leave of his Excellency I expressed my cordial acknowledgments for the energetic action which he was taking on my representations, and added that the Nakhodas of British Indian vessels bound for Bussorah would on calling at Fao be acquainted with the measures which had been adopted, and would be instructed to anchor at night off one of the posts which had been created for their protection.

13. The circumstances of the successful capture and plunder by pirates of the British Indian baghla "Haripasa" in September last year, in which four British Indian subjects of Her Majesty lost their lives, will no doubt be fresh in your memory, and you will concur with me in thinking that no effort should be spared to avert a recurrence of these piratical attacks. I have every reason to hope that the measures which are being taken in concert by his Excellency Hamdi Pasha and Sheikh Mizal will have the desired effect, but while I am convinced that both Hamdi Pasha and the Sheikh are in earnest in wishing to suppress piracy in the Shat-el-Arab, I am by no means sure that the orders which they issue will be efficiently executed by their subordinates.

14. It will, I consider, require the exercise of considerable vigilance on my part to prevent the duties devolving on the latter from being perfunctorily performed, and I venture therefore to request that you will be so good as to place the Royal Indian mail-steamer "Comet" at my disposal from the 25th August until the end of the date season to enable me to proceed down the river periodically and satisfy myself that the protective measures are being properly carried out. Her presence at Bussorah during the date season would, I am of opinion, have an

* Fao, Meshrak, Kharim (Ziyadiya), Sakhan, Kulel Zain, Shamabnomia, Saagar.

excellent effect, and I should be able, in the event of an attack on a British Indian sailing vessel, to leave without delay for the place where it has occurred and to press for a prompt inquiry into the attendant circumstances.

15. I would, in conclusion, report that the port authorities at Bombay and Kurrachee, and the Political Agent in Cutch have been informed by telegram, through the clerk in charge of the Indo-European Telegraph Station at Fao, of the adoption of these protective measures, and they have been requested to give publicity to the information among those concerned.

Inclosure 6 in No. 2.

Acting Vice-Consul Butcher to Colonel Wilson.

Mohammerah, September 17, 1896.

IN view of the piracies that have in former years occasionally blotted the records of this river, and especially of the attack which was perpetrated, vide this Office's letter, dated the 26th September, 1895, on the Indian buggalow "Haripasa" about this time last year, I proposed some months back to his Excellency the Muezz-es-Sultaneh that, as had been done on the Turkish side of the river, he should establish a cordon of posts along his bank with armed boats patrolling between the stations. To this his Excellency agreed, and promised that, when everything was settled, he would let us know when we might, in company with himself, inspect the posts so fixed.

2. On the 14th instant his Excellency the Muezz-es-Sultaneh specially provided his steam-ship "Karon" to make a trip to Fao, and enable us (Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Bassorah, and myself), to inspect his antipiratical posts. En route his Excellency gave us every information in his power, detailing the names of villages with the number of tafangchis, &c., available.

3. These villages to the number of nine, with their approximate distances apart, are as follows:—

On Persian side of river—

Gushah	..	..	..	..	{ Opposite, but about 2 miles northwards of Fao.	
1. Maniochi	..	..	..	..	4 miles northwards of Gushah.	
2. Arash	..	..	..	..	4 " " "	Maniochi.
3. Kheer	..	..	..	..	3 " " "	Arash.
4. Alashan	..	..	..	..	2 " " "	Kheer.
5. Shat-el	..	..	..	..	2 " " "	Alashan.
6. Buzin	..	..	..	..	4 " " "	Shat-el.
7. Jarof	..	..	..	..	2 " " "	Buzin.
8. Harteh	..	..	..	..	3 " " "	Jarof.
9. Mohammerah.	..	..	..	..	3 " " "	Harteh.

4. We landed at Fao, when Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Bassorah, explained our *modus operandi* to the officer in charge of the English cable station, who is shortly to be appointed also British Consular Agent at that place.

5. For example, baghlas are to be warned not to ply on the river at night, but to anchor at sunset off one of the posts above named, when the Nakhoda, presenting a pass signed by the Sheikh Mizal will be supplied with a guard of four or five men. These passes will be issued to Nakhodas passing from or to Mohammerah by Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul, or the British Consular Agent at Mohammerah and Fao respectively. A similar procedure has, I understand, been adopted for the Turkish bank of the river, and we have every reason to hope that this present date season will pass without any piracies being attempted, but if so attempted, they will probably end in the arrest of the culprits, or may even lead to the detection of those concerned in the "Haripasa" outrage.

6. His Excellency the Muezz-es-Sultaneh has only just completed his measures to safeguard the Persian bank of this river (Shat-el-Arab) during the date season that has now opened, and I desire that my official report to you on the subject should synchronise with this completion of the excellent preventive arrangements that have been devised by his Excellency in consultation with Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Bassorah, and myself.

7. I will by next mail forward to your address a supplementary report with a chart of the river and its delta showing the position of the protective stations, both Persian and Turkish, on both banks of the river. A list of the Turkish posts, I have not, as yet, been able to procure from Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Bassorah.

8. In conclusion, I would especially bring to your notice the extreme friendliness and zeal with which his Excellency the Muezz-es-Sultaneh has co-operated with Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Bassorah, and myself in this business.

Inclosure 7 in No. 2.

Colonel Wilson to Government of India.

Bushire, November 7, 1896.

IN continuation of my letter of the 10th October, I have the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, copy of my Report to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

Inclosure 8 in No. 2.

Colonel Wilson to Sir M. Durand.

Bushire, November 7, 1896.

IN continuation of my letter of the 10th October, I have the honour to forward for your Excellency's information,* an extract from the copy of his report† to the Resident at Baghdad, which Captain Whyte has sent to me relating to the last year's piracy on the British Indian vessel "Haripasa."

It will be seen that, as the result of the inquiries, there is good reason to believe the Arabs on both banks of the river must be well cognizant of, if not implicated in, the act, and that their relations with each other as instanced in the fact of five sons of the Mukhtar of the Koweit Sheikh residing at Gusha on the Persian bank, are such as to render specific proof against individuals hopeless, in the face of the concert between the two sides, and the strenuous assertions by the authorities on each side, of the responsibility of the opposite party. Mr. Vice-Consul Butcher reports, under date the 20th October, that Sheikh Mizal is vehement in his protestations of the innocence of his people, and practically repudiates all responsibility, and any further action.

In the circumstances, I venture to recommend for your Excellency's consideration Captain Whyte's suggestion that the redress and indemnity should be demanded from both the Persian and Turkish Governments.

No. 3.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 203.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, March 24, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 528 of the 4th July, 1896, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a Memorandum which I have received from Captain Whyte, formerly Her Majesty's Consul at Bassorah, containing additional information regarding Koweit and the recent assassination of Sheikh Mohammed and Jarrah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

* Paragraphs 7 to 9.

† Dated October 20, 1896.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Memorandum by Captain Whyte on Koweit.

I HAVE perused Mr. Stavrides' Memorandum regarding Koweit and the recent assassination of Sheikh Mohamed and Jarrah, and I propose to indicate the points on which the information which reached me at Bussorah differs from his.

Mr. Stavrides' geographical description of Koweit appears to be entirely correct. He states that the reigning family of Koweit, before the assassination of the two Sheikhs, consisted of four brothers. I believe it to have consisted of five brothers, the four whose names he mentions, and a fifth, named Sheikh Jabber. I may mention that Sheikh Jabber called on me when I was at Fao in November last, and described himself as Sheikh Mubarak's brother.

Mr. Stavrides describes Koweit as being entirely independent, but it seems to me that the acceptance by the Sheikh of an appointment from the Sultan as Kaimakam precludes the possibility of any foreign Power recognizing under the present conditions his independence.

The present Sheikh, Sheikh Mubarak, when at Fao in November last, officially visited the Turkish Mudir of that place, a proceeding hardly consonant with the dignity of an independent Arab Chief. The information which Mr. Stavrides has derived from Palace sources is, I believe, wholly inaccurate. I was assured at Bussorah that Sheikh Mubarak's sole object in killing his two brothers was to usurp the Sheikdom, and to possess himself of the wealth, stated to be very considerable, which Sheikh Mohamed had accumulated. Of the alliance to which Mr. Stavrides refers I heard no mention.

Sheikh Mubarak has, since his usurpation, been employing his late brother's wealth to secure his recognition as Sheikh and his appointment as Kaimakam of Koweit by the Sublime Porte. In this he is reported to have succeeded. The late Vali of Bussorah, Hamdi Pasha, refused, I believe, a bribe of £T. 10,000 which the Sheikh offered for his friendly offices with the Porte, and strongly urged that Mubarak should not be recognized, and that Koweit should be brought more directly under Turkish influence. The present Vali has, it appears, received instructions to recognize the usurper, who is described as having bribed freely in Constantinople, among others the Sheikh-ul-Islam and Sheikh Abul Huda, and I learned before my departure from Bussorah that Arifi Pasha had accepted a present of £T. 7,000 from him. It is not improbable that there will be further trouble at Koweit. The sons of the murdered Sheikh, Mohamed, are reported to have a considerable following, and they will doubtless, on the first favourable opportunity, make an effort to avenge the assassination of their father.

(Signed) J. F. WHYTE.

Pera, March 22, 1897.

No. 4.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 96.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 2, 1897.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 972 of the 24th November last, I transmit herewith, for any observations you may have to offer, a copy of a letter from the India Office on the subject of the piratical attack on the Indian baghla "Haripasa" at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab in September 1895.*

As it is hoped that a satisfactory arrangement will shortly be arrived at with the Porte in regard to British vessels in the Persian Gulf, it would not, in my opinion, be desirable to raise new difficulties at the present moment by holding the Porte responsible for the conduct of the officials of the Sheikh of Koweit, even if he could be regarded as a dependent of the Sultan.

The Sheikh has recently expressed his desire for an interview with the British Resident at Bushire, and I am disposed to suggest that the Secretary of State for India should instruct the British Resident, if the interview takes place, to convey a

serious warning to the Sheikh of the nature indicated in the concluding sentence of the inclosed letter from the India Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 5.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 8.)

Sir,

India Office, April 7, 1897.

WITH reference to the letter from the Foreign Office of the 23rd March last, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to state, for the information of the Marquess of Salisbury, that Captain J. F. Whyte, formerly Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, now in this country, has reported that before his departure from Turkish Arabia he learnt that the object of Sheikh Mubarak, of Koweit, in wishing for an interview with the British Resident at Bushire was in order that he might ask for the establishment of a British Protectorate over Koweit.

2. Lord George Hamilton would be glad to be informed whether Lord Salisbury desires that a telegram should be addressed to the Government of India conveying the intelligence communicated by Captain Whyte, and whether an intimation should be added to the effect that the Foreign Office would not favour the proposal for a British Protectorate over Koweit.

3. A draft telegram in this sense is submitted for the consideration of Lord Salisbury.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Draft of Telegram to Government of India.

MY telegram 24th March.

Whyte now reports that Sheikh of Koweit wishes to propose British Protectorate over Koweit. Such a proposal would not be favoured by Lord Salisbury, who does not consider that we should at most go farther than give an assurance that we will respect his independence (if, in fact, he is independent), and will treat him with friendship in exchange for a promise from him that he will not accept the Protectorate of any other Power.

No. 6.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 20, 1897.

WITH reference to your letter of the 24th ultimo, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you copies of correspondence with Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of the piratical attack on the Indian baghla "Haripasa" at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab in September 1895.*

I am to suggest, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for India, that, when the opportunity presents itself, the Resident at Bushire might be instructed to convey to the Sheikh of Koweit a serious warning in the sense indicated in the concluding sentence of your letter of the 24th March.

I am at the same time to transmit to you a copy of a despatch relative to the attack on the "Haripasa" addressed to Sir P. Currie by Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, and to request that Lord George Hamilton will favour Lord Salisbury with his observations on Colonel Mockler's suggestion that the Turkish

* Sir P. Currie, No. 256, April 15; Inclosure 2 to Sir P. Currie's No. 234, April 6, 1897; and No. 4.

and Persian Governments should be called upon to appoint a Joint Commission to ascertain who the pirates were.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 7.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received May 21.)

Sir,

India Office, May 20, 1897.

I AM desired by Lord George Hamilton to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th April, and to inform you that I have forwarded to the Admiralty a copy of the "Haripasa" at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab in September 1895, and to inclose, for your information, copy of telegraphic correspondence which has passed with the Viceroy in reference thereto.

2. It will be observed that the Resident at Bushire has been instructed to convey to the Sheikh of Koweit, when a convenient opportunity presents itself, a serious warning that his responsibility will be enforced if his subjects are not restrained in future from committing attacks on British baghlas in the waters of the Shat-el-Arab.

3. With regard to the suggestion offered by the Political Resident at Bagdad that the Persian and Turkish Governments should be urged to nominate a Joint Commission in view to the detection of the pirates concerned in the attack on the "Haripasa" at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab in September 1895, it will be noticed

of Persia that she should join in a Commission to find out who were the pirates in the "Haripasa" case which occurred at Fao.

4. But looking to the information collected at Fao by Captain Whyte, the Assistant Political Resident at Bussorah, as to the perpetrators of the piracy, it appears to Lord George Hamilton that, if there is to be a Commission, it is essential that both Turks and Persians, whose territory lies on either shore of the Shat-el-Arab, should be required to take part in the investigation, in order to fix the responsibility on that Government against whose subjects the offence may be proved.

5. If the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs concurs in this view, Lord George Hamilton would further suggest that a British officer should be appointed to attend the Commission in order to watch the proceedings, and to insure as far as possible that the inquiry shall be a real and thorough one.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 7.

Lord G. Hamilton to the Government of India.

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, May 4, 1897.

MOCKLER'S letter of 1st May, 1897, is received. I have forwarded to the Admiralty a copy of the "Haripasa" at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab in September 1895, and to inclose, for your information, copy of telegraphic correspondence which has passed with the Viceroy in reference thereto.

Turkish Commission regarding piracy on "Haripasa."
Foreign Office asks my opinion on suggestion.
Please state your views.

Lord Salisbury also suggests that, when opportunity presents itself, Resident at Bushire should convey to Sheikh of Koweit a serious warning that his responsibility will be enforced if his subjects are not restrained in future from committing attacks on British baghlas.

If you agree, please instruct Resident.

Inclosure 2 in No. 7.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

May 9, 1897.

YOUR foreign telegram of 4th May.

I cannot see any use in demanding of Persia that she should join in Commission to find out who pirates were in "Haripasa" case which occurred at Fao.
As to Koweit, I am instructing Resident as proposed.

No. 8.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 465.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 16, 1897.

HER Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad telegraphed to me on the 12th instant as follows:

"An attack on Koweit by Sheikh Yusuf Ibrahim on the 30th ultimo is reported and 1,100 men armed with rifles, of which 500 came from Haid. The attack of the Persians was repulsed.

"I directed the Consul on the 10th instant to proceed to the spot and furnish a full report on this assault, and on the cases of the piracy which have been reported from the head of the Persian Gulf. I have, however, cancelled this order pending the receipt of further instructions from your Excellency, which I now have the honour to solicit."

I shall be glad to learn your Lordship's wishes as to the reply which I should send to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad.

No. 9.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 467.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 16, 1897.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 465 of to-day, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have been asked by Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, who has been informed that the "Haripasa" was captured at Fao, that the latter place has ever been acknowledged by Her Majesty's Government as being under the protection of Turkey. I propose to answer Captain Fagan in the negative, but in view of the fact that the "Haripasa" was captured at Fao, and in view of the fact that Captain Whyte's Memorandum, forwarded in my despatch No. 203 of the 24th March last, I should be glad before doing so to receive your Lordship's instructions.

No. 10.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 306.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 17, 1897.

IN reply to your Excellency's telegram No. 465 of the 16th instant, I have to inform you that Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the matter does not call for inquiry or action on their part, unless British subjects are affected by the cases of piracy. It is the policy of Her Majesty's Government to maintain the peace of the Gulf by intervening in the struggles at Koweit.

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No. 11

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 307.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, July 17, 1897.

respecting the question of the independence of Koweit.

Her Majesty's Government have never admitted that Koweit is under the protection of the Turkish Government. But since it is practically under Turkish influence, it is doubtful whether we could deny the latter.

No. 12.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 476.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, July 21, 1897.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 307 of the 17th July I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Bassorah the following telegraphic report, dated yesterday:—

On the 9th instant a Turkish corvette went there. She has since returned to Bassorah, and it is said that she is now awaiting instructions from Constantinople directing her to go again to Koweit. A mazbata has been submitted by 500 inhabitants of Zubaira [sic], praying that Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit may be removed. This is the present usurper, called at the Consulate to ask that British influence might be exerted on his behalf.

I should be glad to learn whether your Lordship has any further instructions to give with regard to this question.

No. 13

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 22, 1897.

WITH reference to my letter of the 17th instant I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the decipher of a telegram from Sir P. Currie,* communicating a report by Her Majesty's Consul at Bassorah as to intended proceedings of the Turkish authorities against Koweit, and asking whether Her Majesty's Government wish to give further instructions in regard to the matter.

I am, &c.

No. 14.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 23rd July, regarding Koweit affairs.

India Office, July 27, 1897.

* No. 12

13

Inclosure in No. 14.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, July 23, 1897.

Sheikh Yusuf Ibrahim with large force partly drawn from Persian coast attacked Koweit on the 30th June and was repulsed. Currie informed by Lord Salisbury that unless Chiefs under Treason intervene, or the case is one of piracy affecting British subjects, matter does not affect us. It was added that, whilst we have not recognised Turkish protection over Koweit, it is doubtful whether we could deny Turkish influence. A telegram reports that inhabitants of Zubaira have applied to Porte to remove Sheikh Mubarak. Meanwhile, son of late Sheikh asks for British influence, promising to accept protection. offensive operations. Lord Salisbury does not think British action called for. I propose to concur.

No. 15.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 28.)

Sir,

India Office, August 7, 1897.

WITH reference to your letter of the 22nd July, on the subject of Koweit affairs, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to forward herewith, for the information of the Foreign Office, a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy of India, dated the 29th July, and to state that he concurs with Lord Salisbury in thinking that no action on the part of Her Majesty's Government is required. The further piracies of the 12th May does not appear to have been previously reported to this Office; but the Government of India will learn, by my letter to the Foreign Office of the 18th July (copy of which was forwarded to them on the 16th July) that the proposal to appoint a Commission has been dropped.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 15

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton

(Telegraphic.)

July 29, 1897.

KOWEIT.

Political Resident, Persian Gulf, reports that Yusuf's attack was in pursuance of a plan to capture the port of Koweit. He has been informed by the Viceroy of India that the Government of India will learn, by my letter to the Foreign Office of the 18th July (copy of which was forwarded to them on the 16th July) that the proposal to appoint a Commission has been dropped.

No. 16.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 28.)

Sir,

India Office, September 28, 1897.

WITH reference to the correspondence ending with Sir A. Godley's letter of the 7th August on the subject of Koweit, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to forward a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy dated the 19th September, asking for instructions with reference to an application by Sheikh Mubarak for British protection.

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2. Lord George Hamilton is disposed to inform the Viceroy, subject to the concurrence of Lord Salisbury, that Her Majesty's Government do not propose to interfere in the affairs of that Chiefship more than may be necessary for the maintenance of the general peace of the Persian Gulf.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

Inclosure in No. 16.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton

(Telegraphic.)

September 19, 1897.

MY telegram of the 29th July. Political Resident, Persian Gulf, deputed Assistant to Koweit to warn Mubarak about piracy. Mubarak asked for British protection on same terms as Bahrein, and trivial Chiefs alleged that Turkey intends to absorb Koweit. Mubarak stated that no agreement with Turkey exists. I solicit instructions.

No. 17.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 30, 1897.

I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Salisbury your letter of the 28th instant, inclosing a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy of India relative to an application made by the Sheikh of Koweit for British protection.

I am to request you to inform the Secretary of State for India that Lord Salisbury concurs in the reply which His Lordship proposes to send to the Viceroy.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 18.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 15.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 13th October, regarding Koweit affairs.

India Office, October 14, 1897.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, October 13, 1897.

YOUR telegram of the 13th inst. is received. Her Majesty's Government are not disposed to interfere more than necessary for maintenance of general peace of Persian Gulf, or to grant protection to Koweit.

No. 19.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received October 20.)

Sir,

Admiralty, October 16, 1897.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of the remarks

of the Commander-in-chief on the East Indies Station, dated the 25th August, in reference to reports from the commanding officers of Her Majesty's ships "Pigeon" and "Sphinx," respecting the state of affairs in the Shat-el-Arab River, and in the Persian Gulf.

A similar letter has been sent to the India Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 19.

Rear-Admiral Drummond to Admiralty.

"Eclipse," at Port Louis, August 1, 1897.

ST. B. MITTED, observing that Lieutenant and Commander Moubray's letter very clearly explains the state of affairs, and I inclose an extract from a letter from Commander Baker, the Senior Officer in the Persian Gulf. (The latter was communicated to their Lordships by my submission of the 14th September, 1896.)

2. As regards the piracy in the river (beyond those of the Turkish Stationnaire), it appears that Koweit is the starting point, and as it is nominally an independent State, it seems desirable that the Indian Government should attempt to deal with it, and I agree with Lieutenant and Commander Moubray that the present seems a favourable time. If these matters have to be referred to Constantinople, the delays are great.

3. I have therefore submitted to the Indian Government that it is desirable to take some action in the Persian Gulf.

(Signed) EDMUND DRUMMOND.

Inclosure 2 in No. 19.

Lieutenant-Commander Moubray to Rear-Admiral Drummond.

Sir,

"Pigeon," at Bussorah, July 7, 1897.

IN compliance with your sailing orders dated the 24th May, 1897, I have the honour to forward you a report on the state of political affairs in this district.

2. The British Consul informs me that the reason for requisitioning a man-of-war here, was as follows:

On the outbreak of hostilities between the Turks and Greeks in April last, a telegram was received by Consul-General at Bagdad, and the Consul at Bussorah, ordering them to afford protection to Greek subjects of whom there are a considerable number in both places, principally merchants; this, added to the necessity for protecting British subjects both at Bagdad and on the Shat-el-Arab, was the primary cause for applying for the presence of a British man-of-war at Bussorah. This was the immediate reason which induced Major Fagan, the British Consul, to desire a man-of-war in this port, and he telegraphed to the British Ambassador at Constantinople to this effect on the 26th April, and received a reply on the 12th May that "Pigeon" had been ordered to Bussorah.

3. The British Ambassador at Constantinople sent a despatch to the Consul-General at Bagdad, directing him to instruct British Consul at Bussorah to approach the Wali (Governor) here, on the subject of the Turkish Stationnaire "Dewasir" in the Shat-el-Arab, to invite him to issue instructions to the officer in command of that vessel, clearly stating to him, that the presence of his ship is not intended as a menace to the sailing craft navigating the river, and directing him to abstain from all interference with them.

4. The necessity for this measure arose from the action of the Turks in attempting to assume jurisdiction of the Shat-el-Arab below Mohammerah, contrary to the Treaty of Erzeroum 1847.

5. Last year it was clearly proved by Captain Whyte, the then British Consul here, that she, the Stationnaire, was in the habit of searching British vessels on the plea of their having committed offences on board, but in reality to levy blackmail.

6. The presence of that Stationnaire in that portion of the river below

Mohammerah is clearly illegal, but the Ambassador does not propose to press for her removal, provided the Wali complies with the demands of non-interference made by us.

Voluminous correspondence has passed between the British Consul and the Wali relative to this matter, but as yet no satisfactory reply has been received from him. I have perused this correspondence and agree with the British Consul that nothing short of strong pressure will bring about a satisfactory issue.

8. If this matter is not settled very shortly, the British Consul has been instructed by the Ambassador to inform the Wali that Her Majesty's Government would have again to take the necessary steps for the protection of British sailing-vessels, which practically means that the river would have to be policed by a man-of-war.

9. The sailing-vessels do not begin to run here before the end of August.

10. On our arrival at Fao, I observed the Stationnaire anchored at that place, and they, in concert with the Custom-house officials, soldiers of the fort, and quarantine officials, last year levied illicit taxes on several British vessels. It was with the utmost difficulty the money was recovered. In addition to this there is a large gang of pirates outside and inside the Shat-el-Arab, who attack these huggalows on their own account.

11. These practices are undoubtedly organized, for the most part, by Sheikh Persian subjects.

12. When a piracy occurs, and a representation is made by the British Consuls both at Basorah and Mohammerah, the British Consul at Basorah is invariably informed that they are Persian subjects; whereas the Vice-Consul at Mohammerah is similarly informed by the Wali of that place that they are Turks, and thus no satisfaction is ever obtained.

Her Majesty's Consul at Basorah intends to make strong representations to the Ambassador, stating that, in his opinion, so long as measures are not taken to suppress the Sheikh of Koweit, pirates are certain to continue unchecked.

14. The present Sheikh of Koweit is a usurper, he having murdered both his brothers, and so is not recognized by the Turkish Government. The rightful heir to the Sheikdom is endeavouring to regain his place, under the auspices and the assistance of his uncle, Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim, of Douira, and the present seems to be a favourable opportunity for the British Government to assist the rightful heir who is most anxious to place himself under British protection.

15. Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim has already with eleven huggalows and 1,000 men attacked Koweit on the 30th ultimo, but was repulsed; casualties not yet known.

16. There is no necessity for our presence in the Shat-el-Arab at present, and I would propose that if the hot weather endangers the health of the ship's company to any great extent, that the "Pigeon" should proceed to Muscat or Ras-al-Had until the huggalows begin running up the river. In this the British Consul here quite agrees, so I beg to submit my proposal for your approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. H. MOURRAY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 10

Commander Baker to Rear-Admiral Drummond.

(Extract.)

"Sphinx," August 4, 1896

On the 2nd July I left Rishar for Koweit arriving there on the following day.

"The Chief of that place some few months ago shot his brother, the late Chief, and his nephew, and stepped into his place, with, apparently, the concurrence of the people. No notice at all was taken of the proceedings by the Resident, and it was quite apparent that the presence of an English man-of-war frightened him considerably."

"Koweit is nominally an independent Arab territory, but in reality the Turks exercise great influence over it, more especially since the new Chief acceded to power, he finds it necessary to play into their hands. I paid him a visit, but he

would not come off to the ship; I also noticed that he flew the Turkish flag and taxed him with it, but could not get any satisfactory answer from him."

"We have no Political Agent (Native) there as we have at all other large Arab ports."

No. 20.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 28.)

Sir, India Office, October 27, 1897.
I AM directed to inform you that the Secretary of State for India has received from the Admiralty a letter dated the 16th October, containing a copy of certain correspondence between the Commander-in-chief on the East Indies Station, dated the 25th August, respecting Koweit. It is understood that a similar letter has been addressed to the Foreign Office, and in connection with this subject I am requested to forward a copy of a telegram dated the 20th October received from the Viceroy. Lord George Hamilton proposes to await the receipt of the papers promised by the Government of India before offering any remarks on the telegram referred to.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.) October 20, 1897.

YOUR telegram of the 13th October.

Political Resident's full report on his Assistant's visit to Koweit, states Koweit is centre for piratical expeditions, which endanger our trade with Shat-el-Arab; this is corroborated by independent reports of naval officers. Resident also states that the Sheikh of Koweit is a usurper, and is not recognized by the Turkish Government.

Basorah for the Arabian coast, and as it is said who will devote particular attention to Koweit, papers will be posted from Basorah the 21st of October.

No. 21

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 28.)

Sir, India Office, October 27, 1897.
IN continuation of my letter of to-day's date, I am directed to forward a copy of a further telegram, received from the Viceroy of India, on the subject of Koweit. Lord Elgin inquires whether a gun boat should be sent to watch events in view of the attack upon Koweit which is expected to be delivered next week. I am to forward the Viceroy's telegram to the Foreign Office. Mr. Salisbury considers that it is desirable to act upon this suggestion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 21.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.) October 27, 1897.

MY telegram of the 20th October.

Political Resident hears that Sheikh Jasim of Katr, and Sheikh Yusuf intend to attack Koweit about the 5th November, and asks whether he should send gun-boat to watch events. If report is true, Sheikh Jasim is probably acting in Turkish interests. I request instructions.

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No. 22

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 2)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of telegram to the Viceroy relative to Koweit affairs.

India Office, November 2, 1897.

Inclosure in No. 22.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, October 30, 1897.

YOURS, 27th: Koweit.

No objection to sending gun-boat to watch even if provided Commander instructed not to interfere unless British interests directly menaced.

No. 23

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 20.)

Sir,

India Office, November 18, 1897.

WITH reference to my letter of the 27th ultimo, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to transmit, for the information of the Marquess of Salisbury, a copy of a letter from the Government of India forwarding the papers referred to in the Viceroy's telegram of the 20th October, which was inclosed in my letter, above cited, together with a copy of a further telegram from the Viceroy dated the 11th instant.

The advantages which might be expected to result from a British Protectorate over Koweit, are summarised in the 12th paragraph of Major Mende's report, dated the 25th September last. It appears, however, from the 14th paragraph of the same report that the Sheikh flies the Turkish flag over his residence, and that his predecessor had the Turkish appointment of Kalimakam conferred upon him by the Porte.

In view of these facts it appears to Lord George Hamilton that no sufficient case is made out for the extension of the British Protectorate to a point so far north of the limit of the existing responsibilities of the Government of India. On the other hand, there appears to be nothing in the political situation of Koweit, that need hamper British naval officers in the repression of piracy in case it should be found necessary to bring home to the Sheikh responsibility for acts of that kind.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 23.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Secret.)

My Lord,

Simla, October 21, 1897.

WITH reference to the Viceroy's Secret telegram of the 20th October, 1897, we have the honour to forward, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, copies of the papers described in the attached list regarding the affairs of Koweit.

2. We should be glad to learn, at an early date, whether Her Majesty's Government find in these papers any reason to modify the policy indicated in your Lordship's

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Secret telegram of the 13th October,* upon which no action will be taken pending receipt of a reply.

We have, &c.
(Signed)

ELGIN.
G. S. WHITE.
J. WESTLAND.
M. D. CHALMERS.
E. H. H. COLLEN.
A. C. TREVOR.
C. M. RIVAZ.

Inclosure 2 in No. 23.

Rear-Admiral Drummond to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

"Reliance," at Seychelles, September 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inclose extracts from reports of Officers Commanding Her Majesty's ships in the Persian Gulf and Shat-el-Arab concerning piracy in those parts, pointing out the complicity of the Chief of Koweit, and I would submit to the Government of India that it is advisable to endeavour to exert some influence in this quarter, either through the contested succession, or by the placing of a native Resident.

If this matter falls into the hands of the British Consul at Bassorah, great delays will be the result, all action being taken through our Ambassador at Constantinople.

Inclosure 3 in No. 23

Extract from Letter of July 7, 1897, from Her Majesty's Ship "Pigeon."

10. On our arrival at Fao I observed the "stationnaire" anchored at that place, and they, in concert with the Custom-house officials, soldiers of the fort, and quarantine officials, last year levied illicit taxes on several British vessels (buggalows), and it was with the utmost difficulty the money was recovered. In addition to this, there is a large gang of pirates outside and inside the Shat-el-Arab, who attack these buggalows on their own account.

11. These pirates are undoubtedly organized, for the most part, by Sheikh Muharak, of Koweit, but the pirates themselves are composed of both Turks and Persian subjects.

12. When a piracy occurs, and a representation is made by the British Consuls both at Bassorah and Mohammerah, the British Consul is invariably informed that they are Persian subjects, whereas the Vice-Consul at Mohammerah is similarly informed by the Vali of that place that they are Turks, and thus no satisfaction is ever obtained.

13. The Ambassador, stating that in his opinion, so long as measures are not taken to overawe the Sheikh of Koweit, piracy is certain to continue unchecked.

14. The present Sheikh of Koweit is a usurper, he having murdered both his brothers, and he is not recognized by the Turkish Government. The rightful heir to the Sheikhdom is endeavouring to regain his place, under the auspices and the assistance of his uncle, Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim, of Doura, and the present seems to be a favourable opportunity for the British Government to assist the rightful heir, who is most anxious to place himself under British protection.

15. Yusuf-bin-Ibrahim has already, with eleven buggalows and 1,000 men, attacked Koweit on the 30th ultimo, but was repulsed; casualties not yet known.

* "Her Majesty's Government are not disposed to interfere more than necessary for maintenance of general peace of the Persian Gulf or to grant protection to Koweit."

Inclosure 4 in No. 23

Major Meade to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, September 25, 1897.

IN continuation of my telegram in cypher of the 10th instant regarding Koweit affairs, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Government of India, that Mr. Gaskin, the extra Assistant to the Resident in the Persian Gulf, visited Koweit in the R.L.M.S. "Lawrence" on the 5th instant, and had two interviews with Sheikh Mubarak-el-Sabah, the present Chief. Captain Hewett, of the "Lawrence," was present at these meetings, which took place on shore, the Sheikh preferring not to come on board the "Lawrence," explaining that his doing so might get him into trouble with the Turkish authorities, with whom he must keep on good terms until our protection is assured.

2. The primary and ostensible object of Mr. Gaskin's visit to Koweit was to convey to Sheikh Mubarak the warning of the British Government conveyed in your cypher telegram of the 9th May last, informing him that he will be held responsible for any piratical attacks on British vessels committed by Koweit people. Mr. Gaskin duly conveyed this message to the Sheikh, who, he reports, was much concerned at receiving it. He denied that his subjects at Koweit itself engage in piracy, but admitted that people employed in certain date gardens of his near Huzoorah may do so, adding that he has no control over them. He went on to state that the headquarters of the pirates are on the other side of the Gulf, and that Koweit vessels are also plundered by them. That when he has applied for assistance from the Turkish authorities, the only result has been extortion on the part of the officers and soldiers sent to investigate the cases in question.

He had asked the Wali of Huzoorah for permission to keep two or three armed vessels to patrol the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab, but this was not allowed, and he has now directed that Koweit boats should not exceed two, but always in twos and threes.

He concluded by saying that he fully recognized the necessity for prompt co-operation with the British Government, and would be glad to give their Representative any information he could regarding piracy, and assist in the capture and destruction of the pirates.

3. As regards the dispute between Sheikh Mubarak, on the one side, and his nephews, sons of the late Sheikh, and Yusuf bin-Dhalan, on the other, Sheikh Mubarak told Mr. Gaskin that he would like to have the mediation of Sheikh Faa, of Bahrein, who was a relation, and well qualified for the task. He said that his nephews had lived on good terms with him after their father's death, and that it was in consequence of the intrigues of Sheikh Yusuf that they had turned against him. He added that, although he was quite prepared to come to terms with his nephews, he thought they should not be allowed to live at Koweit. In this he is probably right, for it must be remembered that Sheikh Mubarak assassinated the father of these young men, and nothing that he may do will atone for him in their eyes from the guilt of this crime, or do away with the necessity for revenge on their part.

4. If the other side are also prepared to accept the mediation of Sheikh Faa, of Bahrein, I think he may be informed that we have no objection to his undertaking the task.

5. I now come to the most important part of Mr. Gaskin's mission, which was to ascertain distinctly what the Sheikh's views are in regard to certain advances he has been making of late through our Agent at Bahrein with a view to our extending to Koweit the protection we give to other places on the Arab coast.

6. Mr. Gaskin reports that Sheikh Mubarak told him that he and his people wish Koweit to be placed under British protection such as is enjoyed by Bahrein and the Trucial Chiefs. If the British Government will extend its protection to him, he says he is prepared to assist the British in maintaining law and order in the district, and to pay an annual tribute of 25,000 tribesmen.

7. Mr. Gaskin also reports that the Sheikh's efforts in this direction have been hindered by the Porte, however, have as yet received no definite answer from the Turkish Government.

Sheikh's advances to us may be made with the object of inducing the Turkish Government to hasten their movements.

10. On the other hand, however, he explained to Mr. Gaskin that he had found the Turks grasping and unreliable, and that he and his people believed they were long to entirely absorb Koweit. It was to prevent this, he said, that he wished for British protection. There can be no doubt that Sheikh Mubarak, like other small Chiefs on the Arab coast, is quite ready to ask for British or Turkish protection, as appears best for his own interests, and I doubt if we would have heard much of his desire for our help if the Turks had at once acknowledged him. They, however, appear to be anxious to defer coming to any definite settlement of the succession to the Sheikhship, the delay being probably in consequence of the wish of the local officials to get as much as they can out of both claimants.

11. The delay, whatever its causes, has given us an opportunity of extending our influence in Koweit, which would, I believe, be highly advantageous to our interests for many reasons.

12. Koweit possesses an excellent harbour, and will, under our protection, undoubtedly become one of the most important places in the Persian Gulf. Apart from the chances of its being the sea port for the projected railway from Port Said, which is under consideration, and which the possession of Koweit would enable us to protect, the trade with the interior is already considerable, and will greatly increase. At present, in spite of the Sheikh's assertions, it is regarded as a centre for piratical attacks, and therefore endangers our trade with the Shat-el-Arab. Finally, it is a great slave emporium, and that our efforts to put a stop to the Slave Trade are more or less barren of results as long as slaves can be marched across Arabia, and shipped at Koweit for Turkey and Persia.

13. Piracy and the Slave Trade would receive a blow if we brought the place under our protection, and it would also enable us to exercise a supervision over its trade which would undoubtedly advance our interests in the Persian Gulf.

14. As far, then, as we are concerned, it seems advisable to fall in with Sheikh Mubarak's views, and to extend to Koweit and its Ruler the protection enjoyed by Bahrein and other places on the Arab coast, but I am aware that the Turkish Government claims a certain amount of influence in the place. The Sheikh, for instance, flies a Turkish flag over his own residence, and his predecessor had the title of Kaïnakam conferred on him by the Porte.

15. These facts, however, do not, I think, constitute an insurmountable obstacle to the extension of our own influence. We have never admitted Turkish authority in Koweit, and the Turks, as far as I am aware, have never entered into formal agreements with the Sheikhs, nor have they ever exercised sovereign rights

and to the advance of civilization.

17. As mentioned in my Confidential telegram already referred to, the views of Colonel Loch, Resident, Turkish Arabia, which were conveyed to me by Major Fagan, now Political Agent at Muscat, coincide with mine.

18. I would add that Mr. Gaskin carried out my instructions, and conducted his visit to Koweit in a satisfactory manner, and I am glad to be able to bring this to the notice of the Government of India. He was accompanied by Aga Muhammad Rahim, our Agent at Bahrein, who was here when Mr. Gaskin started, and whose friendship with Sheikh Mubarak was useful in conducting negotiations with him.

Mr. Gaskin was instructed to give no reply to the Sheikh's proposals, and no further action will be taken till I receive the instructions of Government.

Inclosure 5 in No. 23.

Major Meade to Government of India.

Bushire, October 2, 1897.

IN reply to Foreign Department letter, dated the 11th September, inviting my attention to the views of the Turkish Government regarding the extension of British protection to the Arab coast, I have the honour to inform you that the Turkish Government has no objection to our extending our protection to Koweit, and that his efforts in this direction have as yet received no definite answer from the Turkish Government.

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the Oman coast, I have the honour to state that I have requested Major Fagan, the newly-appointed Political Agent at Muscat, to furnish me with a Report as soon as he can, and I heard lately that he was about to go to Sur, no doubt to collect information on the subject.

2. I will make full inquiries myself when I visit Muscat and the Arab coast shortly, and I would ask that the submission of my own Report may be stand over till then when I will, I hope, be in a position to give the Government India reliable information.

Inclosure 6 in No. 23

Major Meade to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

Bushire, October 17, 1897.

MY letter, 25th September. It is reported that Turkish gun-boat has left Bussorah for cruise along Arabian coast, and it is said that she is to devote particular attention to Koweit. If Turks absorb Koweit, it will probably affect British India trade Shat-el-Arab.

Inclosure 7 in No. 23.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

KOWEIT.

November 11, 1897.

Resident was authorized in terms of your telegram of the 30th October to send gun-boat, which has now returned. All was quiet. Sheikh told Commander he was very anxious to be brought under British protection.

No. 24.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 25, 1897.

I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Salisbury your letter of the 18th instant relative to the position of Koweit.

I am directed by his Lordship to state that he concurs in the view of Lord G. Hamilton that there is no sufficient ground for placing it under the protection of Great Britain, but that there is nothing in its political situation to hamper British naval officers in the repression of piracy if it should be found necessary to bring home to the Sheikh of Koweit responsibility for piratical acts.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 25.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 703.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, December 31, 1897.

I HAVE received the following telegram from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bussorah, and have communicated it to the Major-General at Bagdad.

The British Consul at Bussorah reports that sixteen battalions are reported to have arrived, as a coup de main, at Bussorah.

"Three more have arrived for the expedition to Koweit."

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No. 26.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 21.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in India Foreign Secretary's letter of the 9th December, 1897, regarding Koweit affairs.

India Office, January 20, 1898.

Inclosure 1 in No. 26

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, November 12, 1897.

Sir,

IN continuation of my telegram of the 9th instant, I have the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, copy of a letter from Commander Moubray, R.N., of Her Majesty's ship "Pigeon," reporting on his visit to Koweit, in connection with the rumoured attack on that place.

2. The Assistant Political Agent at Bussorah, whom I asked to ascertain confidentially if the Turkish authorities were in any way concerned in the matter, has informed me that he has not learnt of any instigation on the part of the Turks, and that the Turkish gun-boat which left Bussorah a short time ago, is said to be only making her annual cruise along the Arab coast.

I have forwarded a copy of Commander Moubray's Report to the Political Resident, Turkish Arabia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. J. MEADE,
Officiating Political Resident, Persian Gulf.

Inclosure 2 in No. 26

Lieutenant-Commander Moubray to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade.

Sir,

"Pigeon," at Bushire, November 7, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that in compliance with your request in your letter dated the 3rd November, that I should proceed to Koweit, I visited that port yesterday and as soon as I had anchored Sheikh Mubarak sent his son, Sheikh Ibrahim, on to the ship to ask me to come and see him, which I accordingly did, and in the course of the interview he informed me that he did not fear an attack from any of the surrounding tribes, and that at the most his enemies, Sheikh Jassim and Usaf-bin-Brham could only bring 3,000 men against him, whereas he (Sheikh Mubarak) had 16,000 men armed, and at the same time ready to oppose an attack; also that the Bedouin Sheikhs in the surrounding country were his warm allies, and would place several thousand men at his disposal if necessary. There were two Bedouin Sheikhs present at part of the interview, and they, as well as Sheikh Mubarak spoke most bitterly of the Turks.

Sheikh Mubarak impressed on me that he was most anxious to be under British protection, and that recently he had received a letter from his friend Sheikh of Bahrein, saying that he was enjoying peace and quietness under British protection, and strongly urged him (Sheikh Mubarak) to bring about a British Protectorate over Koweit.

2. There are no British subjects at Koweit.

3. In reply to my question, whether Koweit was under Turkish Protectorate, he replied in the negative, and that he wished to throw off all Turkish yoke.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. H. MOUBRAY.

No. 27.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 53.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 27, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, respecting the concentration of troops there, and the state of affairs at Koweit.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 27

Consul-General Loch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 120.)

Sir,

Bagdad, December 30, 1897.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 115 dated the 18th instant, I have the honour, very respectfully, to submit, for your Excellency's information, a copy of my despatch to the Government of India reporting the recent orders for the concentration of troops at Bagdad and affairs at Koweit.

2. Since writing the above, I have had the honour to dispatch to your Excellency by her telegram dated the 23rd instant, reporting the departure of troops from Bagdad, and I was informed of the arrival yesterday of one battalion of the 46th Regiment of about 420 men from Kerkuk, and one battalion from Salahiyeh is expected to reach Bagdad to-day (the 30th).

On the 28th instant six field pieces with thirty gunners and thirty horses left for "Khar Bridge," about 3 miles down the river. On the 29th the men and horses march from Bussorah via Hidah, Dwanich, and Samawa, the six guns being left at "Khar" to be picked up by the "Frat" when she sails from Bagdad. The guns are described to me as 2—14-prs., 2—11-prs., and 2—9-prs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. LOCH, Lieutenant-Colonel.

Inclosure 2 in No. 27.

Consul-General Loch to Government of India.

Sir,

Bagdad, December 22, 1897.

WITH reference to my cypher telegram dated the 16th December, I have the honour very respectfully to place below, for the information of Government, news regarding the recent movements of troops reported the

2. On my return from Bussorah on tour on the 15th instant, I was informed of the concentration at Bagdad of troops as per margin,* or, rather, that orders for the concentration has been issued, and that there were seven battalions, with three already at Bagdad, together with 6 guns, 4 officers, 130 gunners, 150 horses, aggregating in all about 6,000 men, were to hold themselves in readiness to proceed on service, it is rumoured, to Koweit.

I communicated this intelligence to his Excellency, the Ambassador at

had heard, were to be used as a punitive force to cover a rumoured disaster to Turkish arms with the Arab tribes somewhere south. A few hours after receipt of the above telegram, another telegram was received from the Embassy quoting one from the Assistant Political Agent at Bussorah, Mr. Forbes saying that no news of a Turkish disaster had been received there, but that a rumour was prevalent at Bussorah that Sheikh Jasim-bin-Thani, the well-known Sheikh of El Katr, was collecting forces at Katr, near Babrein, and was about to attack Sheikh Mubarak, who had usurped the Chieftainship of Koweit. Sheikh Mubarak has, I am informed, been in communication with Mushir Pasha, of Bagdad, and has asked for help

* 1 battalion from Kerkuk, 1 battalion from Mosul, 1 battalion from Salahiyeh (Kut), 1 battalion from Hidah, 1 battalion from Shatra, 1 battalion from Hama, 1 battalion from Amara, to Bagdad.

against his rival, and I cannot help thinking that my information, which points to Koweit as the destination of the force, confirmed, as it is, by the rumour at Bussorah, is correct.

at present, been suspended, but one of the Oman Ottoman "sul" has been detained here for the conveyance of troops to Iraq, if necessary, and other steamers of the fleet are to be detained as they arrive, so I am informed.

Mushir Rejeh Pasha visited Bussorah in October last, remaining about a week, under the pretence of settling a quarrel between the Wali of that place and the Commodore of the Turkish fleet stationed there. At the beginning of last month Mohsin Pasha, one of the high Commanders at Bagdad, was sent to Bussorah in connection with the same inquiry, and while there he was instructed to relieve the Wali of his duties; but when I was there the Wali still reigned, and he and the Pasha were carrying on the administration together seated in chairs side by side, each cancelling the order the other had issued. Mohsin Pasha's hand in the administration is only a blind to avert suspicion, and he is intended for the command of the expedition, I believe.

I pass on now to discuss the affairs at Koweit.

3. You are aware that in May 1896, Sheikh Mubarak murdered his brothers Muhammad Pasha-el-Sebah and Jerrah, and seized Koweit, and that one of the murdered brother's sons, with the help of Sheikh Yusuf (of Dorn) his maternal uncle, has since (once, if not twice), attempted to recapture the town. In July last, Saoud, the second son of Muhammad Pasha-el-Sebah visited Major Fagan, then Consul at Bussorah, and expressed a hope that Her Majesty's Government would help him in his sore extremity and take him under protection. Major Fagan proposed visiting Koweit in Her Majesty's gun-boat "Pigeon," but before announcing this I referred the question to Sir Philip Currie, who communicated with the Foreign Office at home, and replied to me to the effect that Her Majesty's Government did not consider any interference on our part necessary unless British interests were involved and the peace of the Gulf endangered.

In November last the "Pigeon" visited Koweit and reported that Sheikh Mubarak was most friendly and desirous of our protection. This much I firmly believe, that both factions would gladly avail themselves of our protection and hate the Turks most bitterly.

No Ruler of Koweit has ever shown fealty in any way to the Sultan, and I am credibly informed that the only instances of the Sheikh's applying to the Turkish authorities for help was that they requested that a Kazi might be nominated by them to administer Mohammedan law; but this fell through, owing to the proposed salary being too small to tempt any one to take up the appointment. Sheikh Jasim-bin-Thani, above alluded to, has espoused the cause of the murdered Sheikh's sons, and has invested the town of Katr, which is held by a battalion of Turkish troops, with what result I am unaware.

I hear that a portion of the troops are to leave Bagdad on the 25th instant in the "Mosul," to be followed by other detachments in due course, the concentration to be made at Bussorah.

It may be said that the affairs at Koweit are beyond my sphere and more properly connected with that of the Resident, Persian Gulf. This is true, but I submit most deferentially that the occupation or protection, by the Porte, of Koweit would be a standing menace to our trade interests in Turkish Arabia. Scarcely a day passes but attempts are made to hamper our trade, sometimes by vexatious quarantine Regulations, at others by some move on the part of the Turkish authorities to gain complete control over the mouth of the Saat-el-Arab at Fao, and it is from here that they must be watched and their actions checked. There is, however, another matter connected with this question which has lately forced itself on my attention.

For some months past vague rumours have been afloat that Russia and her agents were working in the Gulf, and I would invite your reference to my letter No. 616, dated the 15th ultimo, in which I forwarded a copy of an Embassy despatch from Constantinople with inclosure,* bringing to my notice that Russia was seeking to acquire a coaling station in that quarter, which confirms, to a certain extent,

* No. 47, Confidential, dated September 21, 1897, from Her Majesty's Consul, Jerusalem, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

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these rumours. Moreover, from hints I have received it is Koweit on which Russia's eyes are fixed.

You will observe that according to Consul Dickson's despatch M. Krouglow, late Russian Consul at Jerusalem, has been instructed to report, after his arrival, on the subject. M. Krouglow has not yet arrived, and it is now doubtful if he will come owing to a death vacancy at Aleppo in the Russian Consular Service, which he is expected to fill. M. Mashkow will, in this case, remain, and the matter will be entrusted to him, I presume. M. Mashkow is an intense Anglophobe and extremely active in intrigue, and I firmly believe that the question of the coaling station will, in the next few months, come prominently to the front.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. LOCH, Lieutenant-Colonel.

No. 28.

Foreign Office to Mr. Lee Warner.

Dear Lee Warner,

Foreign Office, February 7, 1898.

HEREWITH is an official letter forwarding copy of a recent despatch from Colonel Loch at Bagdad, respecting Turkish designs on Koweit. You will see that he suspects an intention on the part of Russia to acquire a coaling station there.

I should have thought it, myself, an unlikely and inconvenient place for the Russians to choose.

But Lord Salisbury thinks it might be well to call the attention of the Government of India to this part of Colonel Loch's despatch to them and ask their opinion.

The previous despatch from Constantinople about the Russian design of obtaining a coaling station was sent to you in our letter of the 21st October last.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 29.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 10.)

WITH reference to Foreign Office letter of the 7th February, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by the direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 7th February, regarding Koweit affairs.

India Office, February 9, 1898.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India

(Telegraphic)

India Office, February 7, 1898.

SEE Loch's No. 659 of the 22nd December.

Have you any confirmation of suspected Russian designs on Koweit?

No. 30.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 11.)

Sir,

India Office, February 11, 1898.

I AM directed by Lord George Hamilton to request that you will lay before the Marquess of Salisbury the inclosed copy of a telegram on the subject of the reported

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Russian designs on Koweit, which his Lordship addressed to the Viceroy on receipt of your letter of the 7th February last, together with a copy of the Viceroy's reply.

Lord George Hamilton will be glad to be informed whether the Marquess of Salisbury is now in possession of any information which might make it desirable to modify the policy with regard to Koweit indicated in his telegram to the Viceroy of the 13th October last, which was sent to the Foreign Office on the 14th idem.

The purport of the telegram in question was communicated to the Foreign Office in Sir Horace Walpole's letter of the 29th September, and approved by the Marquess of Salisbury in your letter dated September and received on the 2nd October last.

I am, Sir,
Very truly,
Yours, &c.
A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 30.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India, February 7, 1898.

[See Inclosure in No. 29.]

Inclosure 2 in No. 30.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

February 9, 1898.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram of the 7th February

No confirmation of Russian designs on Koweit, but Maude reports a M. Adamoff, who, accompanied by two Russian doctors ostensibly on plague duty, last year visited Bagdad in August after touring about the Gulf. Adamoff is not a medical man.

No. 31.

Foreign Office to Admiral Beaumont

Dear Admiral Beaumont,

Foreign Office, February 10, 1898.

WOULD you look at the inclosed papers and return them with your observations on the possibility of Russia desiring to obtain Koweit as a coaling station. It seems to me still very unlikely that they should wish it, or the Turks be likely to cede it?

Do you think we should send the papers officially to Admiralty?

Yours, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 32.

Admiral Beaumont to Foreign Office.—(Received February 18.)

Confidential

Dear Sir Thomas Sanderson,

Foreign Office, 18 Feb 1898

I HAVE carefully gone through the papers which I return herewith.

The anchorage off the town of Koweit is a good one and could well be made into a coaling station, but it is on the way to nowhere, and I cannot conceive why the Russians should desire to have it. If, however, Russia ever descends through Persia to establish herself on the shores of the Gulf, Koweit would be the natural port for any ships which she might get into 'the Gulf'.

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Though it is a large bay it has several good anchorages which could be used to coal warships or transports, and if it became Russian territory, it could, with time and at a large expenditure, be turned into a fortified naval base, the importance of which to Russia would be great.

It seems to me, therefore, that unless there is a probability of Russia being day established on the shores of the Persian Gulf, the rumours of her design to have Koweit as a coaling station cannot have any military significance or importance.

I do not think that as the information contained in the papers stands now that they need be referred officially to the Admiralty.

m, &c
(Signed) L. A. BEAUMONT.

No. 33.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Foreign Office.—(Received March .)

(Private)

My dear Mr. Curzon,

Bushire, March 28, 1898.

MANY thanks for your letter of the 28th February to which I intend sending a further reply later on. I think, however, that I ought to reply to your questions about Koweit at once. I have never been there myself, though I intended going to that part of the Gulf this winter, affairs on the Mekran coast and Muscat have taken up all my time.

There has, too, not been any particular object in going there myself as I was informed that "Her Majesty's Government were not disposed to bring Koweit under British protection, or to interfere with Koweit affairs more than is necessary for the maintenance of the general peace of the Persian Gulf."

My own views have been clearly expressed in various telegrams to the Government of India and are identical with those held by Colonel Loch, the Resident at Bagdad.

The Sheikh has asked for our protection, and we think that it should be afforded as soon as possible, as otherwise the pretended Turkish protection will be made real, and Koweit will become, really, as well as in name, a part of the Bussorah Vilayet.

You ask if I am in favour of our protection (a.) on its own merits, and I reply that I am. Koweit is said by all who know it to be one of the best harbours in the Persian Gulf, and it may become later on a very important place should the railway project of Port Said ever become a reality. I have doubts as to whether this will ever come to anything, but the possibility that it may should, I think, weigh with us in regard to obtaining some hold over the place. If we had it we might later on make it a coaling station, which we want badly, all the harbours being open roadsteads, and not one being actually British.

You ask also if I am in favour of our protection as against (b) Turkey, (c) against any other power or influence. On both these points I am positive, I think that if Turkey or any other Power gets a paramount influence at Koweit it will be the worse for us.

It is said that Russia wants a coaling station in the Persian Gulf and that she has her eyes on Koweit. I cannot, with the information before me, say for certain how far this is correct, but I fancy it is very likely. Generally, I should say that even if we are not immediately interested in getting hold of Koweit for ourselves, we cannot afford to let it fall into the hands of any other Power. We should, therefore, in my opinion, oppose any attempt by Russia or Turkey to get hold of the place, or increase any influence they have there already, and we ought to take advantage of the readiness of the present Sheikh Mubarak to bring him at least under our influence, if it is not possible, at once, to bring him under our protection.

The Arabs hate the Turks, and Sheikh Mubarak wants to be brought under our protection, but he cannot enter into an agreement with us unless we can make up our minds that we can and will protect him. I do not know whether the present is a fitting time to raise any further questions of this sort; but an opportunity

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may present itself, and if it does it should not be lost, as otherwise we may in the future regret that we allowed Koweit to pass into other hands.

Excuse this long letter, and believe me, &c.

(Signed) M. J. MEADE.

No. 34.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 7.)

(No. 569.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 1, 1898.

WITH reference to Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 82 of the 9th February last I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch, which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bagdad relative to the state of affairs at Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. B. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 34.

Acting Consul-General Melvill to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 73.)

Sir,

Bagdad, October 6, 1898.

WITH reference to this Office despatch, No. 2, dated the 8th January last, I have the honour to submit for your Excellency's information, the following extracts from the diary of Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah:—

"September 21st.—On account of the numerous complaints made against Sheikh Mubarak, of Koweit, by his nephews and Sheikh Jassim-bis-Thani, of Katr, accusing him of plundering and killing several people, and to bring about an amicable settlement of the disputes which exist between the above two parties, the Wali, by sanction of the Sublime Porte, appointed a Commission to inquire into the matter.

"Seyid Ahmed Pasha (brother of the Nakib of Bussorah) and Muhammad Pasha have been appointed members of the said Commission and they had an interview with Mubarak Sahab at Fao.

"The Nakib of Bussorah has gone to Koweit to discuss the matter with Sheikh Mubarak.

"September 24th.—A battalion of infantry arrived here by sailing vessels from Nasiriyeh; their destination is said to be Katr.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. J. MELVILL, Major.

No. 35.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 24)

Sir,

India Office, November 23, 1898.

IN acknowledging the receipt of your letter dated the 18th November last, forwarding copy of a despatch No. 569 dated the 1st November from Sir N. O'Connor, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to invite attention to my letter dated the 11th February last on the subject of Koweit. In view of the Commission which is now reported to have been appointed by the Wali, "with the sanction of the Sublime Porte," to inquire into complaints against the Sheikh, the occasion seems to have arisen for considering the issue raised in the letter of the 11th February, to which I have adverted.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

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No. 36.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 1897.

I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Salisbury your letter of the 2nd inst. inquiring whether, in view of the reported appointment of a Commissioner of the Sublime Porte, to inquire into complaints against the Sheikhs of Koweit, it would not be advisable to modify the policy of non-interference with regard to that place as communicated to the Viceroy of India in Lord George Hamilton's telegram of the 18th October, 1897.

I am to state that, in Lord Salisbury's opinion, the question of establishing a Protectorate over Koweit, and the responsibilities which such a Protectorate would entail is a matter primarily for the consideration of the Government of India, as on that Government would fall the duty of undertaking the arrangements to be made for the assertion and maintenance of the Protectorate and the control of the Sheikhs that would be entailed by it.

If the Government of India is of opinion that the Protectorate can be undertaken without difficulty or any inconvenient extension of the duties of police already exercised in the Persian Gulf, Lord Salisbury would approve of such a step, and would be prepared to acquiesce in the establishment of such Protectorate and to support it diplomatically in case the Porte should raise counter-claims. It does not appear that there is any foundation, in fact, for a Turkish claim of sovereignty or control over the district.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 37

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 667. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 22, 1899.

IN acknowledging the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 270 of the 19th instant, inclosing copies of correspondence with the India Office in reference to affairs at Koweit, I beg leave to make the following observations:—

Although the archives of this Embassy do not show that the question of jurisdiction over Koweit has been specifically raised, there is a Minute reporting a conversation between Sir A. Sandison and the Grand Vizier which decidedly implies a recognition of Turkish sovereignty as far as El Katif. I inclose herewith to your Lordship a copy of this Memorandum.

I find, moreover, that Sir William White was informed in your Lordship's telegram No. 101 of the 29th August last, that Her Majesty's Government recognized Turkish jurisdiction as far as El Katif, but that no declaration to this effect was made to the Ottoman Government by Her Majesty's Ambassador on the ground that the Turks already had a garrison at El Bida considerably to the south of Koweit.

Recent correspondence shows that this garrison numbers about 800 men, and that a garrison of about 160 men is also stationed at El Katif.

It appears, however, that not only are acts of piracy of frequent occurrence along the coast, but that Koweit is an emporium for slaves from Arabia passing thence to Turkey and Persia. Representations to the Turkish Government would probably have no more effect in this than in other cases and they would besides have the objection of implying the recognition of Turkish sovereignty, which, whether we recognize it or not on land, we do not apparently admit within the territorial maritime limit. Acts of piracy and of regular Traffic in Slaves would justify the interference of the Indian Government and afford ground for coming to a direct and special arrangement with the Sheikh, which need not necessarily be made public. In course of time this arrangement might be shaped into a more effective form which would serve all practical purposes and give the Indian Government a prior lien upon Koweit.

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Though strongly in favour of the maintenance of British supremacy in the Persian Gulf, I am of opinion that it would be advisable to proceed cautiously and as quietly as possible in regard to the establishment of a British Protectorate over Koweit. Any formal declaration to this effect at the present moment would be considered by the Government of the Sublime Porte as a case it would be sure to produce very serious diplomatic complications, not only with this Government, but probably also with Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. E. O'CONNOR.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Memorandum addressed by Sir A. Sandison to Sir W. White, July 4, 1889.

I HAVE the honour to report that in accordance with your Excellency's instructions I spoke again to the Grand Vizier on Tuesday last on the question of sending troops to El Katr from the Army Corps at Bagdad with a view to ensuring security in that direction. At the same time I pointed out to his Highness by means of a tracing on a flying sheet of paper the position of El Katr and the considerable distance intervening between El Katif and that locality, adding that want of security prevailed between Bassorah and El Katif, and not between the latter and El Katr. I also took the opportunity of mentioning to his Highness the considerations which made it very desirable for the Turkish Government not to extend its military action south of El Katif.

It may be well for me to quote here textually the Grand Vizier's reply, who, on seeing the position of El Katr (the destination of the troops in question) expressed himself by saying, "This won't do at all," and if you leave me that tracing I will see to it.

I shall not fail again to recall his Highness's attention to this matter, and ask him whether the Government has actually given counter-orders respecting the despatch of troops to El Katr.

No. 36.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Foreign Office, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 24th December, regarding a British Protectorate over Koweit.

India Office, December 27, 1895.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, December 24, 1898.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE would approve of a Protectorate over Koweit in a certain degree, but its responsibility for its assertion and maintenance and for control of such a Protectorate devolves upon Government of India, and if you think that it could be undertaken without difficulty or inconvenient extension of the duties of police devolving on your Government in the Gulf, I should wish to know the opinion of the Government of India with special reference to the present state of affairs at Koweit, and to the measures you could take to make the Protectorate effective, relying upon Her Majesty's Government for diplomatic support at Constantinople.

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No. 39.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 2, 1899.)

(No. 672.)

My Lord.

Constantinople, December 29, 1898.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 667, Secret, of the 22nd instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bagdad, containing further information respecting the affairs of Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Acting Consul-General Melvill to Sir N. O'Connor.

Sir,

Bagdad, November 30, 1898.

WITH reference to this Office despatch No. 73, dated the 6th ultimo, I have the honour to submit, for your Excellency's information the following extract from the diary of Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah:—

"November 21.—Sayed Rajab Effendi, the Nakib of Bussorah, left for Katr by steam-ship 'Abdul Kadir' for the alleged purpose of bringing about a reconciliation between Jasum-bin-Thani of Katr and Mubarak Sabah of Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. J. MELVILL, Major.

No. 40.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 4, 1899.

WITH reference to my letter of the 30th ultimo, furnishing copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the question of establishing a British Protectorate over Koweit, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to state that while agreeing in his Excellency's view that it would be advisable to avoid at present any overt steps towards such a measure, he thinks it desirable to take such precautions as are possible against the establishment of any territorial claim on the part of Russia in that district such as might possibly result from the present negotiations by Count Kapnist for concession of a railway from Tripoli in Syria to Koweit with a head from Khanikin to the latter place through Bagdad, Nedjef and Bussorah.

Lord Salisbury would, therefore, propose to the Secretary of State for India that steps should be at once taken to obtain from the Sheikh of Koweit an engagement that he will not cede, lease, mortgage or otherwise alienate any portion of his territories to the Government or subjects of any other Power without previously obtaining the consent of Her Majesty's Government.

Lord Salisbury would be glad to know whether the Government of India have the means of obtaining such an engagement secretly and speedily by means of their officers and the vessels at their disposal in the Persian Gulf, or whether he should request the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send a vessel for the purpose.

His Lordship is of opinion that a sum not exceeding £4,000, or £5,000, if necessary, be offered to the Sheikh for the purpose of obtaining the engagement, and would recommend that this sum should be advanced from Indian Revenue pending decision as to its ultimate incidence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

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No. 41

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 18, 1899.

WITH reference to my letter of the 4th instant concerning the steps which should be taken to obtain an engagement from the Sheikh of Koweit not to alienate any portion of his territory to any foreign Power, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to state that this proposal, which is made by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on diplomatic grounds, should, in his Lordship's opinion, be considered separately from the question of establishing a British Protectorate over Koweit in regard to which he expressed his opinion, as stated in my letter of the 5th ultimo, that action must depend on the power of the Indian Government to afford material support for the maintenance of the Protectorate.

Whether the Government of India should find themselves able, or not, to afford such support, Lord Salisbury considers that it is desirable to obtain the engagement from the Sheikh which he proposes, and which does not in fact go so far as to

towards obtaining this engagement, Lord Salisbury merely desired to employ for Imperial purposes the superior facilities for such a negotiation possessed by the officers of the Indian Government. He did not contemplate that by according that to take any action, or to accept any liability, under any circumstances that might arise in the future.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

No. 42.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 25.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the enclosed telegraphic correspondence regarding the proposed Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit.

India Office, January 24, 1899.

Inclosure 1 in No. 42

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India

(Very Secret.)

(C.)

India Office, January 6, 1899.

CONSTITUTION OF THE SHEIKH OF KOWEIT.
I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, and in reply to inform you that the Government of India have no objection to the proposed Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit, provided that the Government of India are satisfied that the Sheikh of Koweit is a person of sufficient rank and position to enter into such an engagement, and that the Government of India are satisfied that the proposed Agreement is in the interests of the British Empire. I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the proposed Agreement, and to inform you that the Government of India are prepared to sign the same, provided that the Government of India are satisfied that the proposed Agreement is in the interests of the British Empire. I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the proposed Agreement, and to inform you that the Government of India are prepared to sign the same, provided that the Government of India are satisfied that the proposed Agreement is in the interests of the British Empire.

Inclosure 2 in No. 12.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

January 9, 1899.

YOUR telegram, Very Secret, of the 6th instant. I have wired as follows to Resident, Bushire: "Koweit. Government desire to take immediate steps with utmost secrecy possible, in order to avoid suspicion attaching to open Protectorate, to obtain engagement from Sheikh not to cede, lease, mortgage, or otherwise alienate or give for occupation any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other Power without obtaining previous consent of Her Majesty's Government. For this purpose they are prepared to offer 5,000l., or even more if absolutely necessary, to Sheikh. Please telegraph immediately how you propose to effect this negotiation; and, if you go to Koweit, whether you are going in 'Lawrence' or in man-of-war. Also, whether present naval force in Gulf is sufficient." Proposed negotiations, if successful, seem to involve ultimate Protectorate.

Inclosure 3 in No. 12

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

January 10, 1899.

KOWEIT. Meade can visit Sheikh without causing remark, using "Lawrence," and he does not ask for increase of naval force. Meade undertakes to conclude Secret Agreement, but asks for authority to promise yearly payment of 1,000l., instead of a lump sum, to assure Sheikh of our good offices as long as he adheres to the Agreement, and to make the latter binding upon Sheikh and his successors. I await your Lordship's further instructions.

Inclosure 4 in No. 12

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

January 11, 1899.

WOULD not Agreement concluded by Talbot with Trucial Chiefs in 1892 supply best model for Koweit Agreement, with addition named by Meade? I think that terms suggested by Meade are exorbitant, and that Sheikh would probably sign without subsidy, or for much smaller subsidy. In the meantime, Meade is doing nothing until your instructions arrive.

Inclosure 5 in No. 12.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, January 17, 1899.

KOWEIT: your telegram 14th January. I prefer terms of Declaration of 20th March, 1891, with Muscat, rather than those of Agreement with Trucial Chiefs in 1892, which go beyond the necessity of the case. I intended that Sheikh of Koweit should bind himself and successors. I agree with you as to Meade's excessive terms; and if you think annual subsidy preferable, I think 200l. per annum ought to suffice, but I am ready to leave it to your discretion.

Inclosure 6 in No. 42

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

January 18, 1899.

FOLLOWING telegram sent to Meade:—

"You should now proceed to Koweit, and, unless you are satisfied that Meade is a trustworthy person, you should enter into Secret Agreement with him on model of Agreement with Muscat, 20th March, 1891, but in more precise terms of my telegram 8th January, binding Sheikh, heirs, and successors. You may also assure him of our good offices as long as he adheres to Agreement. We rather prefer lump payment to annual subsidy, but leave it to your discretion. Sum hitherto proposed in other case seems to us excessive, as Sheikh will probably jump at Agreement. If you promise annual subsidy, 3,000 rupees would probably suffice, but you must exercise your judgment in the matter."

Caution in first paragraph is due to telegram from Meade reporting rumour of impending attack on Mubarak by nephew, Arab Sheikhs, and Turkish force combined.

Annex.

Praise be to God alone!

The object of writing this lawful and honourable bond is that it is hereby covenanted and agreed between His Highness Seyyid Faysal-bin-Turki-bin-Saeed, Sultan of Muscat and Oman, on the one part, and Colonel Edward Charles Ross, Companion of the Star of India, Her Britannic Majesty's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, on behalf of the British Government, on the other part, that the said Seyyid Faysal-bin-Turki-bin-Saeed, Sultan of Muscat and Oman, does pledge and bind himself, his heirs and successors, never to cede, to sell, to mortgage or otherwise give for occupation, save to the British Government, the dominions of Muscat and Oman or any of their dependencies.

In token of the conclusion of this lawful and honourable bond Seyyid Faysal-bin-Turki-bin-Saeed, Sultan of Muscat and Oman, and Colonel Edward Charles Ross, Companion of the Star of India, Her Britannic Majesty's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, the former for himself, his heirs and successors, and the latter on behalf of the British Government, do each, in the presence of witnesses, affix their signatures on this 9th day of Shaaban, 1308 (A.H.), corresponding to the 20th day of March (A.D.), 1891.

E. C. Ross, Colonel,
Political Resident in the
Persian Gulf.

Signature of His HIGHNESS SEYYID
FAYSAL-BIN-TURKI-BIN-SAEED,
Sultan of Muscat and Oman.

LANSDOWNE,

Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

Ratified by his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, at Simla, on the 23rd day of May, 1891.

H. M. DURAND

Secretary to the Government of India,
Foreign Department

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No. 37

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received January 30)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 30th January, regarding the conclusion of Secret Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit.

India Office, January 30, 1899

Inclosure in No. 1

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

January 30, 1899

MEADE telegraphs from Koweit Secret Agreement concluded. Report to follow. He is now on his way to Muscat.

No. 44.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.—(Communicated by India Office, February 3.)

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

February 3, 1899

IN the event of Turkey making armed attack upon Koweit, which Meade telegraphs is possible, may I authorize naval force in Gulf to forbid it?

No. 45

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.—(Communicated by India Office, February 4.)

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, February 4, 1899.

YOUR telegram of the 3rd February

If Turks attempt to attack Koweit, you are authorized to instruct naval force to forbid and prevent it. Obtain, as soon as possible, from naval officer in command, report on defensibility of Koweit by naval force alone.

No. 46.

[Nil]

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No. 47.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 6, 1899.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you, for the secret information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, copies of telegraphic correspondence, as marked in the margin,* between the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy with respect to the conclusion of a Secret Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit binding him not to alienate any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other Power without the previous consent of Her Majesty's Government.

Their Lordships will observe that the Viceroy has been authorized to instruct the naval force at his disposal to forbid and prevent any armed attack which may be made upon Koweit by the Turkish authorities.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

No. 48

N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 7.)

(No. 34.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 3, 1899

WITH reference to my despatch No. 672 of the 29th December, 1898, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from the Acting British Consul-General at Bagdad relative to affairs on the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.

(For the Ambassador).

(Signed) C. SPRING-RICE

Inclosure 1 in No. 48.

Acting Consul-General Melvill to Sir N. O'Connor

(No. 629.)

Sir,

Bagdad, December 28, 1898

IN continuation of my despatch No. 94, dated the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to submit, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch No. 75, dated the 20th instant, from Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, reporting the return of the Nakib of Bussorah from Katr, and that his efforts at mediation between Sheikh Jasim-el-Thani of Katr and Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit proved futile.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. J. MELVILL, Major.

Inclosure 2 in No. 48.

Consul Wratisslaw to Acting Consul-General Melvill.

(No. 780)

Sir,

Bussorah, December 20, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to report that Seyyid Rajab Effendi, Nakib of Bussorah, who was sent a month ago to Katr to make peace between Sheikh Jasim-el-Thani of Katr and Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit, returned on the 10th instant by the steamer "Abdul Kadir." He reports that Sheikh Jasim declined to see him, on the ground that on a previous occasion a reconciliation brought about by the Nakib's

* See Inclosures in Nos. 35, 42, and 43, and Nos. 44 and 45.

intervention on the Sultan's orders resulted in a renewed attack on the part of Mubarak, where a great number of persons belonging to Katr were killed and much property was looted. For this latter outrage, Sheikh Jasim telegraphically informed His Imperial Majesty that he would exact vengeance, and it was in consequence of his telegram that the Nakib was sent on his unsuccessful mission of mediation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Inclosure 3 in No. 48.

Acting Consul-General Melvill to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 637.)
Sir,

Bagdad, December 29, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to submit, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch No. 751, dated the 21st instant, from Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, reporting the arrival at that port of the hired transport "Abdul Kadir" with the relieved garrisons from Haza and Katr.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. J. MELVILL, Major.

Inclosure 4 in No. 48.

Consul Wratislaw to Acting Consul-General Melvill.

(No. 751.)
Sir,

Bussorah, December 21, 1898.

I HAVE the honour to report that the hired transport "Abdul Kadir" arrived here yesterday with three battalions of infantry from Haza and Katr, under the command of Colonel Nejim Bey. These troops, which, as well as the battalions already in Bussorah, belong to the 46th Regiment, 11th Division, will be permanently stationed here. They have been relieved by three battalions, which left Bussorah for Katr on the 14th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 49.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received February 10.)

(Secret.)
Sir,

Admiralty, February 9, 1899.

IN acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, relative to the Secret Treaty recently concluded with Sheikh of Kuwait, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to request that you will state to the Marquess of Salisbury that a print of the telegraphic correspondence which has passed between the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy has been sent to the Commander-in-chief on the East Indies Station, who has been enjoined to observe the strictest secrecy in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

No. 50.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 11.)

THE Under Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord Salisbury, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy respecting the Kuwait Agreement.
India Office, February 11, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 50.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, Feb.

YOUR telegram, 30th January, Kuwait. Please telegraph Secret Agreement.

No. 51.

[Nil]

No. 52.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 14.)

Sir,

India Office, Feb.

1 AM directed by Lord George Hamilton to inclose, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a telegram received dated the 12th February.

2. It will be observed that the Kuwait Agreement goes beyond Muscat engagement, dated the 20th March, 1891, but that it has been ratified by the Viceroy. I am to request that the attention of Lord Salisbury may be drawn to the authority for which Colonel Meade's penultimate sentence of the telegram, and to the inquiry made by the concluding sentence as to whether he is to ratify the Agreement.

I am, &c.
(Signed)

Inclosure in No. 52.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

Feb.

YOUR telegram of the 10th February.
Kuwait Agreement just received. After preamble as in Muscat Declaration.

"Sheikh Mubarak of his own free will and desire does hereby pledge and bind himself, his heirs, and successors, not to receive the Agent or Representative of any Power or Government at Kuwait or at any other place within

territories without the previous sanction of the British Government. He further binds himself, his heirs, and successors, in terms of your telegram of the 6th January." Then follows a clause intention of which I do not understand, but which may perhaps refer to territories in Turkish occupation:—

"This engagement also to extend to any portion of the territories of said Sheikh Mubarak, which may now be in possession of the subjects of any other Government."

Final clause is as in Muscat Declaration, the date being 10th Ramazān 1299, i.e. 1st January. Meade found Turkish corvette at Kow on next day. Mubarak told Meade's Assistant he had previously received overtures from French. Mubarak asked Meade for written declaration of British Government's intentions towards him, and definite promise of protection. Meade gave letter containing following passage:—

"I now assure you as Sheikh of Koweit of the good offices of the British Government towards you, your heirs, and successors, as long as you, your heirs, and successors, scrupulously and faithfully observe the conditions of the said bond."

Meade's letter promised payment of 15,000 rupees, on ratification of the Agreement, and laid stress upon importance of condition that Agreement should be kept absolutely secret.

Mubarak's two brothers, who were invited by the Sheikh to attest document, refused to sign, because Meade declined to bind Government to protect Koweit family in their estates near Fao. These estates were formerly part of Koweit, but have been gradually absorbed by the Turks. Their revenues are said to be about 6,000l. sterling a year, and chief source of Koweit family's income.

Mubarak assured Meade that concurrence of his brothers is not necessary to make agreement binding on his successors. Meade does not think the brothers likely to turn against Mubarak or to divulge Agreement, but asks for authority to tell Mubarak and his brothers that their interests in regard to their Turkish estates will be looked after and receive consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Doubtful whether this assurance should be given, although estrangement of the brothers would be regrettable. Shall I ratify the Agreement?

No. 53.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 14.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and by direction of Lord George Hamilton forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 14th February, regarding Koweit affairs.

India Office, February 14, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 53.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton

(Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)

February 14, 1899.

RELIABLE conclusive evidence that two Russians have gone to Koweit via Bussorah with an order from the Turkish Government to Sheikh, to give them every assistance. It is rumoured that Turkey knows of his Treaty and is suspicious. He has no news of special military preparations at Bussorah.

No. 54.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Foreign Office, February 14, 1899.

Sir, I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Salisbury your letter of the 14th instant, inclosing copy of a telegram from the Viceroy which contains a summary of the Agreement recently arrived at with the Sheikh of Koweit.

With regard to the two questions raised by the Viceroy in the concluding sentences of his telegram, I am to state (1) that Lord Salisbury sees no objection to Colonel Meade holding out a hope that Her Majesty's Government will do what they can to protect the family estates of the Sheikh of Koweit and (2) that his Lordship considers that the Agreement may be ratified.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 55.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 15.)

(Secret.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy relative to the Agreement with the Chief of Koweit.

India Office, February 14, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 55.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Secret.)

India Office, February 14, 1899.

YOUR telegram of the 12th instant: Koweit Agreement.

You may ratify it as regards estates of Mubarak and brothers near Fao, and a hope may be held out to the Sheikh that we will do what we can to protect them.

No. 56.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 16.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 16th February, regarding the defence of Koweit.

India Office, February 16, 1899.

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Inclosure in No. 56.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

February 15, 1899.

KOWEIT. Your telegram of the 3rd February.

Admiral Douglas reports that, with sufficient warning to collect ships, navy alone can undertake defence of Koweit.

No. 57.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Foreign Office, February 16, 1899.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 14th instant and previous correspondence on the subject of Koweit, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to request that he may have the earliest possible notice if any preparatory measures are considered necessary for the defence of Koweit against a Turkish attack.

It is desirable, if there should at any time be indications of an impending attack, that a serious warning should be given to the Turkish Government before forcible means are resorted to on the spot for preventing such action.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

No. 58.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 17.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 16th February, relative to the defence of Koweit against a possible attack by Turkey.

India Office, February 17, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 58.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, February 16, 1899.

YOUR telegram of the 15th February: Koweit.

Lord Salisbury desires to have earliest possible notice, if preparatory measures are found necessary for defence of Koweit against Turkish attack, in order to give serious warning to Turkey before forcible measures are used on the spot to prevent such attack. Please arrange accordingly to obtain and send information.

No. 59.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 17.)

(No. 8.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, February 17, 1899.

IT is possible that the two Russians alluded to in your Lordship's telegram No. 29 of the 15th February may have gone to Koweit in connection with the railway.

I have instructed Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah to make inquiries confidentially, and to report as to their proceedings.

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The forcible landing of the Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence" and of the Bushire Resident at Koweit, in spite of the opposition of the Sanitary officer, and their interview with the Sheikh, have been reported to the Turkish Government through the Sanitary Board. The Board has asked the British Delegate for an explanation.

I have the honour to refer your Lordship to my despatch No. 59 of yesterday's date.

No. 60.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 19.)

(No. 9.)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, February 19, 1899.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 8 respecting the presence of Russians at Koweit, I am informed by the Vice-Consul at Bussorah that one Russian has gone to Kntr, and that the other is now at Koweit.

No. 61.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 20.)

(No. 52. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 18, 1899.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 26 of the 4th instant and previous correspondence relative to Koweit, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a telegram, addressed to the Ottoman Sanitary Administration by the Quarantine Doctor at Bussorah, which was read to the Board of Health on the 7th instant, and which has been communicated to me by Dr. Dickson, British Delegate on the Board.

In this telegram the Quarantine Doctor reports that the Sanitary officer at Koweit had sent word that Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence" arrived on the 9th January from Bushire, but that in view of the Sanitary Regulations he had refused to admit the ship to the port. That in spite of his opposition, the Commander, in company with the British Resident from Bushire, had landed by force, and visited the Sheikh in his house.

The officer requested instructions to guide him in similar cases, and Dr. Dickson, in communicating to me the telegram, suggested that Her Majesty's Representative at Bushire might be asked for an explanation.

I have requested Dr. Dickson not to recur to the question; but in case it were mentioned again, to inform the Board that he had referred the matter to Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, which had received no information on the subject, but would probably make inquiries.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Dr. Sheporich to the Ottoman Sanitary Administration.

(Télégraphique.)

Bussorah, le 5 Février, 1899.

PRÉPOSÉ Koweit rapporte que navire de guerre Anglais "Lawrence," provenant de Boucheire, mouilla le 9 Janvier dans port de Koweit. Notre préposé, vu provenance bateau, informa Commandant qu'il ne pouvait pas l'admettre en libre pratique. Commandant, avec Consul Anglais du Boucheire, furent débarqués par force à Koweit, et visitèrent Cheikh dans sa maison. Attends vos instructions pour ma gouverne occasions similaires.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 20.)

(No. 59. Secret.)

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 14, Constantinople, February 16, 1899, the complaint of the Sanitary Board of the Viceroy's ship "Lawrence" on the receipt of the despatch of the 18th February, 1897, a communication was addressed to Dr. Dickson, in which it was stated that they could not accept any Resolution which was contrary to that view. At the same time it was suggested to Dr. Dickson that he should not unnecessarily make any formal declaration on the subject, but should, if the occasion arises, refer to the British Protectorate of Bahrain and the independence of Kuwait as recognized and established facts.

I may add that the recent proposal of the Board of Health to establish a Sanitary Station at Mohammerah, in Persia, as reported in my despatch No. 14 (Commercial) of the 4th February, does in itself exclude any claim to that sovereignty being founded on the mere fact of the establishment of a Quarantine office dependent on the Constantinople Board.

I have,
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR

No. 60.

N 3

No. 61

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 27)

(No. 12.

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, February 25, 1899

MY telegram No. 9 of the 19th instant: Kuwait

Mr. Wintidaw telegraphs that another Russian has just passed through Bussorah, on way to Kuwait, with a letter of recommendation from the Vali for the purchase of lamb-skins. He is of Armenian extraction, and is a merchant of Bagdad.

No. 65

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 25, 1899.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* reporting that the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence," accompanied by Her Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf, are stated by the Sanitary officer at Kuwait to have landed by force at that place, in spite of the Sanitary Regulations, and visited the Sheikh in his house.

* No. 61

This visit is no doubt connected with the recent incidents at Kuwait referred to in your letter of the 17th instant and previous correspondence for the consideration of the Secretary of State for India, that Colonel Sanderson, under of Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence" should be requested to take command of the ship.

A copy of a further despatch from Sir N. O'Connor in regard to this incident is also inclosed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 66.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 2.

(Secret.)

Sir,

India Office, March 2, 1899

I AM directed to forward, for the information of the Marquess of Salisbury, a copy of a telegram received from the Viceroy of India on the subject of measures for the protection of Kuwait.

I am to invite attention to the opinion expressed in the last sentence, and to inquire whether the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs desires that any communication in reference to it should be addressed to the Viceroy.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 66.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton

(Telegraphic.)

March 2, 1899.

YOUR telegram of the 18th February

Admiral says no preparatory measures by navy would be necessary. He only suggests a warning to concentrate a few ships at Kuwait, and suggests that he might be authorized to forcibly prevent Turkish transports from leaving Shat-el-Arab. In the event of concentration of ships being thought necessary, I shall telegraph immediate information to your Lordship, and I think that the Admiral should be authorized to stop transports, provided he is satisfied of their destination.

No. 67

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 3, 1899.

I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Salisbury your letter of the 2nd instant, inclosing a telegram from the Viceroy of India on the subject of the measures to be taken for the protection of Kuwait.

With regard to Lord Curzon's opinion that the Admiral should be authorized to stop Turkish transports, provided he is satisfied of their destination, I am to state that if such instructions are given they should be sent through the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Lord Salisbury is, however, of opinion that it will be more prudent not to send these instructions till occasion arises.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

* No. 62

[1503]

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No. 65.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 8.)

(Secret.)

Sir,

India Office, March 8, 1899

WITH reference to your letter of the 6th instant, on the subject of the measures to be taken for the protection of Koweit, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to request that you will submit to the Marquess of Salisbury the inclosed copies of telegrams which have passed between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, and to inquire whether his Lordship desires that a reply should be sent to Lord Curzon's telegram of this day's date, and in what terms.

I am to add that, in his Lordship's opinion, there are objections to the proposal that general and uncondit instructions should be issued to the Admiral in advance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 68.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic)

India Office, March 7, 1899.

YOURS of the 2nd: Koweit.

Lord Salisbury doubts expediency of authorizing stoppage of transports until occasion arises, and in any case considers that such instructions, if issued, should issue from Admiralty.

Inclosure 2 in No. 68

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

March 8, 1899.

YOUR telegram of the 7th March.

I had not proposed that Admiral should be instructed otherwise than by Admiralty. If authority is not to be asked or given until occasion arises, is there any danger of transports reaching destination while we are telegraphing? Will Lord Salisbury consider advisability of issuing such instructions as he desires?

No. 69.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 11, 1899.

I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Salisbury your letter of the 8th instant, inclosing copies of telegraphic correspondence with the Viceroy of India with regard to the measures to be taken for the protection of Koweit.

I am to suggest, for Lord George Hamilton's consideration, that, in reply to the Viceroy's telegram of the 8th instant, his Excellency should be asked to state what grounds there are for sending any instructions at present to the Admiral in the sense proposed, as no attack on Koweit is now impending.

I am to observe that it has already been agreed that in the event of any appearance of hostile action being contemplated by the Turkish authorities, a serious warning should be addressed to the Porte on the subject, and that this should precede any forcible measures for preventing such action. The immediate issue of instructions to the Admiral in the sense suggested would tend to reverse this course of procedure, and Lord Salisbury notes further that past experience

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does not authorize us to feel any security that such instructions, if issued, would remain secret.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 70.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 112. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 8, 1899.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 12 of the 25th February, I have the honour to report that Mr. Wratislaw, Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, informed me, by telegram, on the 3rd March, that the Russian Armenian, reported in his telegram of the 23rd February to have gone to Koweit, has returned. The other two Russians, who are both Mussulmans, are still there.

I have requested Mr Wratislaw to communicate this information to the Political Resident at Bushire.

I am, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 71.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 14.)

Sir,

India Office, March 14, 1899.

I AM directed to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a letter in the Secret Department, dated the 23rd February, from the Government of India, relative to the conclusion of a Secret Agreement, dated the 23rd January last, and concluded with Mubarak-al-Sulub, Sheikh of Koweit.

I am to add that, subject to the concurrence of the Marquess of Salisbury, Lord George Hamilton proposes to approve of the action taken by Colonel Meade in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 71.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Secret.)

My Lord,

Fort William, February 23, 1899.

WITH reference to the correspondence ending with your Lordship's telegram dated the 16th February last, we have the honour to forward herewith, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, copies of the papers regarding Koweit affairs and the conclusion of a Secret Agreement with the Sheikh.

We have, &c.
[Unsigned.]

Inclosure 2 in No. 71.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

January 30, 1899.

IN continuation of recent Secret telegraphic correspondence about Koweit, I have the honour to submit a report on the present position of affairs there, for the information and orders of the Government of India.

2. On the receipt of your Secret telegram of the 19th January last, I arranged to leave

Bushire in the Royal Indian Marine steamer "Lawrence," K. I. Island on the 20th, I arrived at Koweit on the morning of the 21st. I found the corvette, the "Zohaf," in the harbour, but decided not to alter my plans on that account, and sent Lieutenant-Commander Kendall, of the "Lawrence," with Mr. J. C. Gaskin, Extra Assistant Resident, who knows Arabic, to call on Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sabah, and tell him that I had come and would like to make his acquaintance.

3. The Sheikh expressed his pleasure at my arrival, but begged me to excuse his coming off to call, as, if he did, he would afterwards be obliged to visit Turkish men-of-war, which would expose him to considerable risks. I was prepared for this, and told Mr. Gaskin to inform Mubarak that I would not press him to come on board the "Lawrence," but hoped he would send a confidential representative from himself to see me, as I had certain communications to make.

4. Accordingly, on the following morning one of the Sheikh's brothers, who had sided with him, Sheikh Hamud-bin-Sabah, came off and had a private interview with me, during which I informed him that Sheikh Mubarak's request to be brought within the sphere of British influence had come to the notice of Her Majesty's Government, who were prepared to have a secret understanding with him on certain conditions. The terms of the proposed Agreement were then carefully explained to Sheikh Hamud, who said that his brother would be glad to comply with the wishes of Government; but at the same time he referred to the fact that the family own considerable property in Turkish territory, and he expressed a hope that the British Government would promise to help them in regard to those estates, which they may lose if they offend the Turks. I told him that I was not authorized to guarantee any particular possessions, and would have to refer his request for orders. He then begged me to try and see Sheikh Mubarak himself, and discuss the question direct with him. Sheikh Hamud said he would inform his brother what the British Government require, and he then returned to Koweit. Mr. Gaskin soon after followed, and had another interview with Mubarak.

5. I should here mention that inquiries I had made, immediately on my arrival, led me to think that there is no reason for anticipating an immediate attack being made on Sheikh Mubarak, whose position was further described as more assured than it had previously been. I consider, therefore, that I ought to endeavour to carry out the instructions I had received, and conclude the Agreement with him as soon as I could.

6. The Turkish corvette left Koweit for Fao on the afternoon of the 22nd, and as Mr. Gaskin on his return reported that Sheikh Mubarak was anxious to see me, I decided to land the following morning.

7. Mr. Gaskin reported that although Mubarak was anxious to enter into an Agreement with the British Government, he would not do so unless I gave him a written assurance that he would receive our support afterwards, and he also informed me that the Sheikh would be glad to receive 15,000 rupees, equivalent to about £1,000, in return for an engagement not to cede, sell, lease, &c., any portion of his territory. I had directed Mr. Gaskin to sound the Sheikh on this point.

8. I met Sheikh Mubarak on the 23rd January, and showed him the Agreement which I had previously prepared. Three copies of it, duly signed by the Sheikh and myself, accompany this letter, to be ratified, if approved by his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, and it will be seen that, in addition to the clause providing against cession, sale, lease, mortgage, &c., of his territory, the Sheikh has bound himself not to receive Representatives from other Powers. This condition appeared to me very desirable, as Mubarak had told Mr. Gaskin that he had received overtures from the French, and I trust that it will be approved by the Government of India.

9. At our interview Sheikh Mubarak, while expressing his great satisfaction at the prospect of an understanding between himself and the British, for whom he declared that

he was in trouble with the Turkish authorities, I ought to give him in writing a declaration of the intentions of the British Government towards himself. He asked for a definite promise of protection and assistance, especially in regard to the property belonging to his family situated in Turkish territory, and he declared that this assurance should form part of the document which he was asked to sign. I informed him that the draft Agreement I had prepared was similar to those executed by other Chiefs, and that I was not empowered to enter on its stipulations binding the British Government. Subsequently, in view of the importance of the early conclusion of the negotiation with the Sheikh, I agreed to give him a letter, a translation of which accompanies, and I told him that my instructions did not admit of my promising anything more than is in it. As he still pressed for a guarantee, and given that the British Government would guard the family property in Turkish territory, I informed him that I must leave Koweit, and ask for fresh instructions if he

did not see his way to sign the Agreement as it stood, and accept the general assurance of our good offices contained in my letter.

10. The Sheikh then, without further discussion, decided to sign the Agreement, and I followed his example, and my signature was duly attested by Captain Residency Surgeon, and Mr. Gaskin, who had accompanied me. After he had signed, he said he would like to call on his brother, Sheikh Hamud, show him the Agreement, and get him to attest his signature. He evidently expected that his brother would do this without raising any difficulties; but when the Agreement and my letter were read over and explained, Sheikh Hamud refused to sign the former document, and declared that it was necessary that the British Government should engage to protect the family in their Turkish property before he would be a party to an engagement which might bring them into conflict with the Turks. A discussion, which lasted the rest of the day, failed to alter this resolve, and the Sheikh's other brother, Sheikh Jabir-bin-Sabah, took the same line, and refused to put his name on the Agreement.

11. It was not possible to carry out such an important negotiation without the knowledge of the Sheikh's brothers, who had known all along of his overtures to us, and, as they are co-sharers in the family property, it was desirable to have their assent. As this, however, could not be obtained, Sheikh Mubarak's signature was eventually attested by Agha Muhammad Rahim, our Agent at Bahrein, who is his personal friend, and whom I had taken with me to facilitate the negotiation with him.

12. The Agreement concluded with Sheikh Mubarak should be binding on him and future Sheikhs of Koweit, and he assured me that the concurrence of his brothers is not necessary to make it so. It should facilitate the declaration of an open Protectorate later on, if Her Majesty's Government decide to declare it, for it is, as far as I can ascertain, the first and only engagement ever executed between a Sheikh of Koweit and the Government of any country. It ought, therefore, to stand in the way of attempts by other Powers, or their subjects, to obtain a foothold in this important place.

13. While, however, a decided advantage has been obtained by the conclusion of this Agreement, it must be borne in mind that the fact that the Koweit family possess considerable estates in Turkish territory complicates relations with them. The Sheikh's brothers, according to Turkish law, cannot hold landed property in Turkey, and, if they pass under the protection of the British Government, the Turks will, as a law in operation, and deprive them of their estates, which form their chief source of revenue. They hesitate, therefore, to commit themselves to a course which may result in serious loss to themselves, unless they are assured of protection in regard to those estates. I told them that the family would receive our good offices, and that I myself thought these good offices would extend to all property belonging to its members; but that I could not give any specific assurance as to the course which could be taken in regard to immovable property situated within the jurisdiction of another State.

14. Sheikh Mubarak himself appeared to understand this, and to realize the advantage which will result to the Arab Rulers of Koweit from having an understanding with the British Government. As long, therefore, as the Agreement is kept secret, no difficulty is likely to arise; but the Turkish authorities are no doubt already aware of my visit to Koweit, and their suspicions being aroused, they may decide to support the other claimants to the Sheikhship, and try to dispossess Mubarak of his property near Fao. I am informed that he has made alliances with various tribes in the interior of Arabia, and he considers himself quite secure as regards his position in the town of Koweit, which can, moreover, be defended by gun-boats from the harbour. There is not, therefore, much danger of an effective attack being made on the place itself. I will, however, require instructions as to the course to be taken if the Turks confiscate the date gardens, &c., in the Bussorah district.

15. These estates were formerly a part of Koweit itself, and have gradually been absorbed by the Turks, whose activity in these parts has greatly increased of late years. If we assume a Protectorate over Koweit, Her Majesty's Government may be able to arrange that the Sheikh's rights in these properties are guaranteed to him. If this is not feasible, some other course of diplomatic action will be necessary to insure that the family are not deprived of their revenues.

16. In view of this, I think I might be authorized to tell Sheikh Mubarak and his brothers that their interests in regard to their Turkish estates will be looked after, and receive the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. It seems to me desirable that we should do this, as it will effectually prevent his brothers from turning against Sheikh Mubarak, and perhaps inducing them to do so. I do not think that they are likely to do so, at any rate at present; but it will be as well to guard against the possibility and to insure their silence.

17 I have not been able to ascertain the exact amount of the revenue of the Koweit family on the Turkish side of the Shat-el-Arab, but I hear that it brings in about 6,000l. a-year. The revenue is chiefly collected during the date harvest, until which it is improbable that any interference will be attempted.

Inclosure 3 in No. 71

Translation of Arabic Bond

Præbe be to God alone (Ala, in the name of God Almighty). ("Bismillah Ta'alah Shukran")

THE object of writing this lawful and honourable Bond is, that it is hereby agreed and agreed between Lieutenant-Colonel Melcolm John Meade, I.S. Her Britannic Majesty's Political Resident, on behalf of the British Government, on the one part, and Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sheikh Subah, Sheikh of Koweit, on the other part: that the said Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sheikh Subah, of his own free will and desire, does hereby pledge and bind himself, his heirs and successors, not to receive the Agent or Representative of any Power or Government at Koweit, or at any other place within the limits of his territory, without the previous sanction of the British Government, and he further binds himself, his heirs and successors, not to cede, sell, lease, mortgage, or give for occupation or for any other purpose, any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other Power without the previous consent of Her Majesty's Government for these purposes. This engagement also to extend to any portion of the territory of the said Sheikh Mubarak which may now be in the possession of the subjects of any other Government.

In token of the conclusion of this lawful and honourable Bond, Lieutenant-Colonel Meade, I.S. and Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sheikh Subah, the former on behalf of the British Government and the latter on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors, do each, in the presence of witnesses, affix their signatures, on this the 10th day of Ramazan, 1316, corresponding with the 23rd day of January, 1899.

(Signed) M. J. MEADE, Political Resident in the
Persian Gulf
MUBARAK-AL-SUBAH
(I.S.)

Witnesses:
(Signed) E. WICKHAM HORN, Captain, I.M.S.
J. CALCOTT GASKIN.
M. HANNAH, Kaim-Munshih, Kaim-Sheriff
Saffar.
(L.S.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 71.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Subah.

(Translation.)

(Secret.)

(After compliments.)

January 23, 1899.

IN view of the signing to-day of the Agreement, so happily concluded between you, Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Subah, on behalf of yourself, your heirs and successors, on the one part and myself on behalf of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, I have the pleasure to inform you, as Sheikh of Koweit, of the good offices of the British Government towards you, your heirs and successors, as long as you, your heirs and successors, scrupulously and faithfully observe the conditions of the said Bond.

The three copies of the Bond will be sent to India to be ratified by his Excellency Lord Curzon, of Kedleston, Her Imperial Majesty's Viceroy, and Governor-General in Council; and, on their return, one copy, duly ratified, will be conveyed to you, when I will take measures to send you, as agreed, a sum of 15,000 rupees from the Bushire

Treasury. A most important condition of the execution of this Agreement is, that it is to be kept absolutely secret, and not divulged or made public in any way without the previous consent of the British Government.

Inclosure 5 in No. 71.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade

Calcutta, February 12, 1899.

(Telegraphic.)

KOWEIT. Your No. 10 of 30th January, with Secret Agreement: received 11th February.

I do not understand the third provision extending engagement to territory now in possession of subjects of other Governments. Does it refer to Mubarak's estates near Fao, which the Turks have gradually absorbed?

Inclosure 6 in No. 71.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade.

Fort William, February 16, 1899.

WITH reference to your letter No. 10 dated the 30th January last, I am directed to return two counterparts of the Agreement in Arabic concluded with the Sheikh of Koweit, duly ratified by his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General.

2. The duplicate should be sent confidentially, in your Office, and the triplicate handed to the Sheikh of Koweit.

Inclosure 7 in No. 71.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade.

Calcutta, February 17, 1899.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram, 9th February: Agreement ratified 16th February.

A hope may be held out to Sheikh Mubarak that British Government will do what they can to protect him and his brothers in the matter of their estates near Fao.

Inclosure 8 in No. 71.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade.

Calcutta, February 17, 1899.

IF preparatory measures are found to be necessary for defence of Koweit against Turkish attack, please send immediately information, by post, to Lord Curzon, to a Lord to Her Majesty's Government opportunity to give warning to Turkey before forcible measures are used on the spot to prevent such attack. Repeated to his Excellency the Naval Commander-in-chief.

Inclosure 9 in No. 71.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India.

Jask, via Kurrachee, February 19, 1899.

(Telegraphic.)

KOWEIT Agreement. I added provision you mention to guard against possible transfer of some house property at Koweit itself, belonging to Turkish subjects, to Russians or others. Mubarak promised not to permit any such transfer without permission of Her Majesty's Government.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 11.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 14th March, regarding Koweit affairs.
India Office, March 14, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 72.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram 8th March: Koweit.

India Office, March 14, 1899

Lord Salisbury inquires what grounds exist for immediate instructions to Admiral, as proposed, since no attack is imminent. Procedure now authorized is that, when hostile action by Turkey is contemplated, serious warning will be addressed to Porte before preventive measures are taken. Proposed instructions to Admiral would reverse this procedure, and also involve risk of publicity.

No. 73.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 16.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 16th March, regarding the defence of Koweit.

India Office, March 16, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 73.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Telegraphic.)

KOWEIT. The grounds for instructions to Admiral, as proposed by me, were that ~~admiral~~ reached us in February that Turkish troops had gradually been concentrated at Bussorah, and were believed by Resident to be meditating early attack on Koweit. To avert this or any similar danger in future, I suggest(ed) that general instructions should be issued from the Admiralty to stop Turkish transports from starting at any time for Koweit. If no such instructions are issued in advance, the Turks may have landed there before we hear of it in India. In any case, unless British gun-boat happens to be on the spot at this moment, we shall probably be too late to stop them.

British Vice-Consul at Bussorah has been instructed by us to telegraph immediately any probable movements of Turkish troops.

No. 74.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 20.)

(No. 10. Secret.)

My Sir,

Constantinople, March 11, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 112, Secret, of the 8th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have

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received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bagdad, forwarding two despatches from Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah respecting Colonel Meade's visit to the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab and affairs at Koweit.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. B. O'CONNOR

Inclosure 1 in No. 74.

Acting Consul-General Melvill to Sir N. O'Connor

(No. 6. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bagdad, February 15, 1899

I HAVE the honour to submit, for your Excellency's information, two despatches from Mr. A. C. Wratislaw, Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. J. MELVILL, Major

Inclosure 2 in No. 74.

Consul Wratislaw to Acting Consul-General Melvill

(No. 8.)

Sir,

Bussorah, February 2, 1899

I HAVE the honour to report that a few days ago two Russians arrived from Bagdad bearing a letter of introduction from the Wali of the former place to the Wali of Bussorah, in which the latter was requested to give them a letter of recommendation to the Sheikh of Koweit, calling on him to aid them by all means in his power, as requested by the Russian authorities. They have now left the district, and are, I believe, at Koweit, their ostensible object being trade. One of them was, I hear, at Koweit last year dealing in lamb-akins.

In this connection, I may state that the recent visit of Her Majesty's Resident and Consul-General at Bussorah to the mouth of the river has caused considerable perturbation in Turkish official circles here. The arrival of the "Lawrence" at Bas was immediately telegraphed to Bussorah by the Mudir of the place, who reported that Colonel Meade was accompanied by a numerous staff, and was on business connected with the Koweit. The British Consul-General, on patrol duty in those parts, also telegraphed that Colonel Meade had landed at Koweit, and had had an interview with Sheikh Mubarak.

In the course of conversation yesterday the Wali remarked to me on the visit of the "Lawrence," and I endeavoured to tranquillize his Excellency by assuring him that Colonel Meade had simply come to the Shat-el-Arab on a shooting excursion, to which I had myself been invited to take part, but my statement did not appear to impress his Excellency to any remarkable extent.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Inclosure 3 in No. 74.

Consul Wratislaw to Acting Consul-General Melvill

(No. 10. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bussorah, February 6, 1899

WITH reference to my despatch No. 8, of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to report that a letter has been received by the Wali of Bussorah from the Turkish Consul at Bussorah reporting that the British Consul-General at Bussorah, on patrol duty in those parts, also telegraphed that Colonel Meade had landed at Koweit, and had had an interview with Sheikh Mubarak. He also stated that the British Consul-General at Bussorah intend to dispatch a ship of war to

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the Persian Gulf, and that a French Agent would probably call at Koweit before long.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 75.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 21)

Sir, India Office, March 20, 1899.
I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the consideration of the Marquess of Salisbury, a copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, of the 18th instant, which is a reply to the question put in your letter dated the 11th March.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY

Inclosure in No. 7

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton

(Telegraphic.) March 18, 1899.
KOWEIT. The grounds for instructions to Admiral, as proposed by me, were contemplated at Bussorah, and were believed by Residant to be necessary to prevent the landing of Turkish troops at Koweit. To avert this, or any similar danger, it was stated that general instructions should be issued from the Admiralty to stop Turkish transports from starting at any time for Koweit. If no such instructions are issued in advance, the Turks may have landed there before we hear of it in India. In any case, unless British gun-boat happens to be on the spot at the moment, we shall probably be too late to stop them. British Vice-Consul at Bussorah has been instructed by us to telegraph immediately any probable movements of Turkish troops.

No. 76

(Very Confidential)

Sir, Foreign Office, March 21, 1899.
I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Salisbury, your letter of the 14th instant, inclosing a Report from the Government of India of the conclusion of a Secret Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit, on the 23rd January last.

I am to state that Lord Salisbury concurs in Lord George Hamilton's proposal to approve the action taken in this matter by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

No. 77

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received March 30.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, a copy of a despatch to the Government of India, No. 6, dated the 10th March, and inclosures, regarding Koweit affairs.

India Office, March 29, 1899

Inclosure 1 in No. 77.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

My Lord, I FORWARD, for the information of your Excellency in Council, a copy of a letter dated the 25th February from the Foreign Office, relative to a complaint made by the Sanitary officer at Koweit against the reported action of the Commander of the Royal Indian Marine ship "Lawrence." I shall be obliged if your Excellency will call upon Colonel Meade for a report on the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE HAMILTON

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Foreign Office, February 25, 1899.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence," accompanied by Her Majesty's Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence," accompanied by Her Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf, are stated by the Sanitary officer at Koweit to have landed by force at that place, in spite of the Sanitary Regulations, and visited the Sheikh in his house.

This visit is no doubt connected with the recent incidents at Koweit, referred to in the 17th instant and previous correspondence.

I am to suggest, for the consideration of your Lordship, that Colonel Meade and the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence" should be requested to furnish a report on the subject.

A copy of a further despatch from Sir A. O'Connor in regard to this incident is also inclosed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

Inclosure 3 in No. 77.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury

(No. 52 Secret.)

Constantinople, February 16, 1899

My Lord, WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 26 of the 4th instant, and in answer to your Lordship's telegram of the 11th instant, I have the honor to inform you that the quarantine doctor reports that the Sanitary officer at Koweit, on the 7th instant, and which has been communicated to me by Dr. Dickson, British Delegate on the Board.

In this telegram the quarantine doctor reports that the Sanitary officer at Koweit, on the 7th instant, and which has been communicated to me by Dr. Dickson, British Delegate on the Board.

The officer requested instructions to guide him in similar cases, and Dr. Dickson, in communicating to me the telegram, suggested that Her Majesty's Representative at Bussorah might be asked for an explanation.

I have requested Dr. Dickson to mention again to inform the Board that he had referred the matter to Her Majesty's Embassy, which had received no information on the subject, but would probably make inquiries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

Inclosure 4 in No. 77.

Dr. Stépopich to the Ottoman Sanitary Administration.

(Télégraphique.)

Busorah, le 5 Février, 1899.

PREPOSE Koweit rapporte que navire de guerre Anglais "Lawrence" provenant de Bouchire mouilla le 9 Janvier à Koweit. Le Commandant avec Consul Anglais de Bouchire furent débarqués par force à Koweit et visitèrent Cheik dans sa maison. Attends vos instructions pour ma gouverne occasions similaires.

Inclosure 5 in No. 77

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury

(No. 50. Secret)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 10, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch, No. 32, Secret, of the 15th February respecting the complaint of the Sanitary authorities against the landing of a Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence" at Koweit, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, on the receipt of the Foreign Office telegram, No. 8, Commercial, of the 5th February, 1897, a communication was addressed to Dr. Dickson informing him, for his guidance, that Her Majesty's Government regarded both Basra and Koweit as independent States, and that they could not accept any resolution of the Sanitary Board which was contrary to that view. At the same time it was suggested to Dr. Dickson that he should not unnecessarily make any formal declaration on the subject, but should, if the occasion arises, refer to the British Protectorate of Bahrein, and the independence of Koweit as recognized and established facts.

I may add that the recent proposal of the Board of Health to establish a sanitary station at Mohammarah in Persia, as reported in my despatch, No. 16, Commercial, of the 4th February, does, in itself, exclude any claim to that sovereignty being founded on the mere fact of the establishment of a quarantine office dependent on the Consular authorities.

I have, &c.
Signed, N. R. O'CONNOR

No 78

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury — (Received April 10)

(No. 163. Secret)

My Lord,

Constantinople, April 6, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 120 of the 1st ultimo, I have the honour to transmit copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Busorah, sending me copies of his Reports to Her Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bagdad respecting the visit of certain Russian subjects. The first of these reports have already reached your Lordship in copy in my above-mentioned despatch. The third, herewith inclosed, states that another Russian subject has proceeded to Koweit with letters from the Vali of Basrah to Sheikh Mubarak.

Mr. Wratislaw takes occasion to inquire what is his position with regard to Koweit. In my reply, of which a copy is likewise inclosed, I have directed him to consider this region as lying outside his district, but to watch events there, and to report any interference with it on the part of the Ottoman authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 78.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 10. Confidential.)

Sir,

Busorah, February 25, 1899.

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 17th instant, I have the honour to inform you that I have been given to understand by the Consul-General at Bagdad that Koweit is entirely outside my province, lying within the district of the Bahrein at Basrah, and I have therefore been enabled to inform myself concerning what goes on there. The place is, however, considered by the British Government as being under the protection of the British Government, and I should be grateful for a statement from your Excellency of my position with regard to it.

I have the honour to inclose copies of three despatches which I have addressed to the Consul-General at Bagdad on the subject, and which have been communicated already to your Excellency.

I have, &c.
A. C. WRATISLAW

Inclosure 2 in No. 78.

Consul Wratislaw to Acting Consul-General Melvill

(No. 11.)

Sir,

Busorah, February 25, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 8 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to inform you that I have been given to understand by the Consul-General at Bagdad that Koweit is entirely outside my province, lying within the district of the Bahrein at Basrah, and I have therefore been enabled to inform myself concerning what goes on there. The place is, however, considered by the British Government as being under the protection of the British Government, and I should be grateful for a statement from your Excellency of my position with regard to it.

The two Russians, whose visit to Koweit I reported in the above despatch, have understood that one has gone on to Koweit, and the other is at present at Koweit on private business. I have the honour to avail myself of the opportunity to sound the Sheikh concerning the object of Colonel Meade's recent visit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW

Inclosure 3 in No. 78.

Sir N. O'Connor to Consul Wratislaw

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Constantinople, April 5, 1899.

IN reply to your despatch No. 10, Confidential, of the 25th February, I have to request that you will continue to regard Koweit as being included in the district of the Bahrein at Basrah, and lying outside your district. This division is the part of the Ottoman authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR

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No. 79.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 171. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, April 12, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 112 and 163, Secret, of the 3rd March and 6th April last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, recording a conversation which he has recently held with a Russian subject of Armenian extraction who has lately visited Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. B. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 79.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 12. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bussorah, March 6, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 10 of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to report that I have seen M. Ovanessof, the Russian Armenian of whose visit to Koweit I have already informed your Excellency. He told me that the other two Russian subjects, Abbas Aliof and Abdollah, are still at Koweit. They are natives of the Caucasus, and Abbas, at least, is a well educated man, speaking Russian, Turkish, and Arabic. He has hired a house at Koweit, and proposes to stay there some time and buy up lamb-skins.

I have no doubt that this trio are really engaged in trade, but it is quite possible that they may be at the same time in the temporary employ of the Russian Consul at Bagdad.

Ovanessof appears to be an extremely intelligent man. He informed my Dragoman that the Russian Consul at Bagdad had offered him the post of unpaid Vice-Consul at Bussorah, but that he had declined it unless a salary were attached thereto.

Sheikh Mubarak is absolute master within his own territory, and any Russian intrigues would have to be worked through him. Colonel Meade is in touch with him, and would doubtless hear and report any attempt to buy up land or otherwise tamper with Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 80

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 17.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in Government of India Foreign Secretary's letter, dated the 30th March, respecting Koweit affairs.

India Office, April 15, 1899.

Inclosure 1 in No. 80.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India

Telegraphic)

Bussorah, March 23, 1899.

YOUR Secret telegram of the 16th March.

British Consul at Bussorah informs me that he has no news of importance. Thinks it is not likely that Turkey will attempt anything against Koweit for some

time, as hot weather is beginning. Confidential Agent from Mubarak shortly expected, and I will send a report by him. Is money, if the Government of India authorizes it.

Inclosure 2 in No. 80.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade.

(Telegraphic.)

Calcutta, March 24, 1899.

YOUR telegram 23rd March

You may send ratified Agreement and money as proposed.

Inclosure 3 in No. 80.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade.

Confidential.)

Fort William, March 25, 1899.

I AM pleased to refer to your telegram dated the 23rd March last, regarding Koweit affairs.

2. In order to prevent any misapprehension, I am to explain that the instructions issued to you in the telegram from the Government of India in the Foreign Department, dated the 16th March last, should be understood as requesting immediate information if at any time hereafter Mr. Wratislaw has news of any probable movement of Turkish troops towards Koweit.

No. 81

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received April 18.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a Secret despatch to the Government of India, dated the 30th March, and inclosures, respecting the Secret Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit.

India Office, April 16, 1899.

Inclosure 1 in No. 81.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Secret.)

India Office, March 30, 1899.

My Lord,

WITH reference to the letter of your Excellency's Government in the Foreign Department, dated the 23rd January last, I forward herewith, for the information of your Government, copy of the correspondence, from which it will be seen that Her Majesty's Government approve the action taken in this matter by Lieutenant-Colonel Meade, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

2. I have to point out, however, that, inasmuch as Lieutenant-Colonel Meade had been instructed to conclude an Agreement similar to that which exists with the Sultan of Muscat, he was not authorized to stipulate that the Sheikh should not receive Representatives from any Power or Government without the previous sanction of the British Government. As this proviso has been introduced, it will remain in force; but the relations of the Sheikh with the Turkish Government, will require the careful attention of your Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE HAMILTON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 81.

India Office to Foreign Office

Sir,

India Office, March 14, 1899.

I AM directed to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a letter in the Secret Department, dated the 23rd February, from the Government of India, relative to the conclusion of a Secret Agreement, dated the 28th January last, and concluded with Mubarak-al-Subah, Sheikh of Kuwait.

I am to add that, subject to the concurrence of the Marquess of Salisbury, Lord George Hamilton proposes to approve of the action taken by Colonel Meade in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 81

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 21, 1899.

I HAVE laid before the Marquess of Salisbury your letter of the 14th instant, inclosing a report from the Government of India of the conclusion of a Secret Agreement with the Sheikh of Kuwait on the 28th January last.

I am to state that Lord Salisbury concurs in Lord George Hamilton's proposal to approve the action taken in this matter by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON

No. 82

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor

(No. 95.)

Foreign Office, April 21, 1899

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 163, Secret, of 6th instant, inclosing a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Bassorah, respecting the visit of certain Russian subjects to Kuwait.

I approve the reply which you have returned to Mr. Wratislaw's inquiry as to his position with regard to Kuwait and the course he should pursue in connection with events there.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY

No. 83

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 29.)

(No. 96.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, May 24, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 171 of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit copy of a Secret despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Bassorah, in which he reports that the Vali of Basra, who is reported to have been appointed as Vali of the Vilayet may have on the position of Mubarak, Sheikh of Kuwait.

Mr. Wratislaw recalls the fact that at the time of the murder of Mubarak's brother, the late Sheikh Mohammed Pasha, the claims of Saoud and Sabah, the two sons of the murdered man, were strongly supported by Hamdi Pasha, who urged upon the Porte the opportunity then offered for the occupation of Kuwait by Turkish troops. It was only

after long delay and by dint of the lavish expenditure of money that Mubarak was able to secure recognition in Constantinople as Sheikh and Kaimakam of Kuwait.

Since Mubarak's interview in January last with the Resident of Bushire, the former the object of distrust on the part of the Turkish authorities, and Mr. Wratislaw points out the likelihood of the resuscitation of the claims of Mubarak's two nephews who would not be likely to shrink from any conditions imposed upon them.

The facts related by Mr. Wratislaw possess considerable interest at the present moment. It is quite possible that Hamdi Pasha may succeed in persuading the Turkish Government to espouse the cause of Mubarak's nephews. Should this eventuality become imminent, it might be desirable to warn the Turkish Government that owing to the importance of British interests in the Persian Gulf, Her Majesty's Government would view with displeasure any expedition against Mubarak. It is true that a remonstrance of this kind would be of little avail, and we should have a more substantial basis, in case of future developments, to rely upon than an agreement with an untrustworthy Arab Chief of Mubarak's antecedents.

I hear privately from Mr. Wratislaw that it is reported that the Fao garrison is to be considerably increased. If this be true it is probably with a view to acting against Kuwait in case of need.

Mubarak's date gardens are near Fao, and the first act of hostility would be to sequester them.

I have instructed Mr. Wratislaw to keep me informed of the Vali's intentions, and to be on the watch for any signs of a move against Kuwait. It is probable that India would be likely to regard an expedition against Kuwait.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR

Inclosure in No. 83

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 21.)

Sir,

Bassorah, April 22, 1899.

IT appears not improbable that the reappointment of Hamdi Pasha to the post of Consul at Bassorah will result in a change of policy towards Kuwait.

It is during Hamdi Pasha's first tenure of this office that Mubarak had his dispute with the Sultan, and for the restitution of the landed property which should have come to them, but which had been appropriated by Mubarak. At first it appeared likely that their petition might be taken into consideration, as it was strongly supported by the Vali, who urged on the Porte the convenience of the occasion for the effective occupation of Kuwait by Turkish troops. Mubarak, however, spent money lavishly in enlisting on his side the Mushir of Baghdad, Rezaq Khan, and other high officials, whose influence at Constantinople finally prevailed, and Mubarak was eventually at the end of 1897 recognized as Sheikh and appointed Kaimakam of Kuwait by the Sultan.

It is also to be noted that Ibrahim, of Dera, their maternal uncle; Sheikh Jassim, of Kutr; and also, to a less extent, Sheikh Abdul Aziz, of Shammar. The first named went so far as to make an armed attack on Kuwait in June 1897, which was not, however, pushed home; and Jassim has several times threatened the same thing. Sheikh Yusuf Ibrahim was obliged to leave the country in order to avoid the consequences of his breach of the peace, but he is endeavouring to procure his pardon from the Sultan.

Since Hamdi was reappointed the nephews have come into Bassorah from Zobeir, where they previously resided, and they will doubtless press their claims with renewed activity now that they can reckon on the sympathies of the Governor-General.

The interview which the Resident at Bushire had in January last with Mubarak has increased the suspicions of the Turkish authorities, and has rendered them very anxious to take steps in that direction.

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Having lost confidence in Mubarak, their sense of justice may be tardily awakened, and lead them to think of righting his injured nephews, who on their side are not likely to shrink from any conditions which may be imposed on them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 84.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 2, 1899

WITH reference to my letter of the 18th April last, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of the affairs at Koweit.*

Lord Salisbury would be glad to be favoured with any observations which Lord George Hamilton may wish to offer on Sir N. O'Connor's despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 85.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 8.)

Sir,

India Office, June 7, 1899.

I AM directed by Lord George Hamilton to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 2nd June, forwarding a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, No. 259, Secret, dated the 24th May, relative to affairs at Koweit.

I am to inclose a copy of Colonel Meade's letter to the Government of India, dated the 30th April last, in which that officer dwells on the importance of arriving at a definite understanding with the Ottoman Porte on the subject. It is observed that Sir N. O'Connor considers that, if Hamdi Pasha should seem likely to induce the Turkish Government to espouse the cause of Mubarak's nephews, it might be well to warn that Government that Her Majesty's Government would view with displeasure any expedition against Mubarak. Lord George Hamilton cannot but fear that the reappointment of Hamdi Pasha may lead to complications, and he is disposed to suggest, for the consideration of the Marquess of Salisbury, that the Turkish Government should be warned as proposed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 85.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India.

(Secret.)

Bushire, April 30, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Government of India, that I have sent one of the copies of the Agreement made with the Sheikh of Koweit, received with your letter, dated the 18th February, 1899, to Sheikh Mubarak, through our Agent at Bahrein, to which place the Sheikh sent a confidential servant to receive it.

2. I have, at the same time, as authorized in your telegram of the 20th February, held out a hope to the Sheikh that the British Government will do what it can to protect him and his brothers in the matter of their estates near Fao.

3. The Sheikh has further been informed that the 15,000 rupees agreed on will be sent to him by the way most convenient to himself. I have informed him that I think

* No. 23.

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the money had better be sent to Bahrein in the R. I. M. S. "Lawrence" when at the end of May, for annual repairs, and handed over to the agent at that place. The "Lawrence" will be taking specie to Bombay, and the money for Koweit can be shipped, along with the rest, without exciting notice. Unless, therefore, some other and better means of payment is proposed by the Sheikh, I will send it, as stated above, by the "Lawrence."

4. The Turks appear to have some knowledge of our recent negotiations with the Sheikh of Koweit, and it is rumoured that they are sending a small force to Fao, for objects connected with the former place. I telegraphed this information to you on the 17th instant, and the further reports I have since received tend to confirm the news.

5. The present time of year is not favourable to movements of troops in the regions, and it is unlikely that an expedition against Koweit itself can be undertaken before the autumn. It is, however, also unlikely that Sheikh Mubarak will be allowed to get his date harvest from his estates near Fao unmolested, and the question of the assistance which Her Majesty's Government are prepared to afford the Sheikh and his brothers, in respect to those properties, may soon require settlement.

6. I venture, therefore, to recommend that, as soon as I report that an increase of the Turkish force at Fao has actually been carried out, Her Majesty's Government may be urged to direct our Ambassador at Constantinople to inquire what the object of the movement is, and should inform the Porte that we will not permit an attack to be made on Koweit.

7. The question will then become one for diplomatic discussion between the two Governments, and will probably be capable of an early settlement. An understanding, I should imagine, may be arrived at with Turkey, by which the independence of the Sheikh of Koweit will be guaranteed, and by which any actual rupture with the Turks will be avoided.

8. The recognition of Mubarak-el-Sabah as Sheikh and Ruler of Koweit would, of course, have to be one of the conditions, and he would be obliged to carry out the terms of the Agreement he has made with us.* His rights to a share of the Fao estates would also require to be placed on a satisfactory footing, and, at the same time, the claims of his nephews can be taken up, and a suitable provision for them can, and ought, be settled, if the division of the ancestral property is submitted to arbitration.

9. It seems very desirable that some definite settlement of the Koweit question should be arrived at during the coming summer, during which, although it will be difficult for the Turks to take any active measures against the place, it will also be inconvenient for us to keep our men-of-war in the Persian Gulf. Any collision between the Turks and ourselves would, of course, be most undesirable, and would much increase the difficulties there are in the way of a satisfactory arrangement.

10. If an understanding can be arrived at with Turkey before the autumn, the necessity for maintaining a stronger naval force than usual, at this end of the Persian Gulf, will no longer exist, but if the matter is still unsettled, a few months hence, it will be desirable to have at least two gun-boats in readiness to go to Koweit if the Turks intend to attack it.

No. 86.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 292. Secret.)

Constantinople, June 6, 1899

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship two documents respecting Koweit which I have received from Mr. Wratislaw, Her Majesty's Consul at Bassorah.

The first is the paraphrase of a telegram stating that the new Vali, Hamdi Pasha, spoken of in your letter of the 18th February, has been informed of the designs upon Koweit from various quarters of British designs upon Koweit; and that the Vali is of opinion that His Majesty would be willing to discuss the question with a view to a friendly settlement.

The second reports that the Sheikh of Koweit has imposed 5 per cent. duty on all imports from Turkey, and that, upon the Director of the Bassorah Customs com-

plaining of this proceeding, the Governor-General, Hamdi Pasha, begged question should not be brought forward at this moment.

I think it may be assumed that it will be obvious to the Turkish Government that the Sheikh of Koweit would not have dared to impose a duty on Turkish products without foreign support, and it may also be assumed that the Sheikh has been indiscreet in his language and boastful of British protection, but that it may be doubted whether the Turkish Government will put his words to the test by attempting to punish him.

Were it possible, without the negotiations being divulged, we might approach the Sultan with a proposal that he should engage not to cede to any other Power any of his rights over the coast of the Persian Gulf. There are, however, two objections to this course. I consider secrecy to be well nigh impossible, and that it would be difficult to make the engagement applicable to Koweit without implying an official recognition of Turkish sovereignty.

There remains the course of waiting for further developments while at the same time instructing Mr. Wratislaw to hint to the Governor-General, when the occasion offers, that an attack upon Koweit might get him into trouble, and enjoining upon the Sheikh Mubarak, through some private channel, to be more cautious in his action and language. Some warning of this kind seems the more necessary that the protection of British political interests in the Persian Gulf may ultimately involve the protection of the Sheikh of Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. E. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 86.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Confidential.)
(Telegraphic) P.

Bussorah, June 4, 1899.

THE Vali spontaneously introduced the subject of Koweit in the course of a conversation I had with him to-day. His Excellency stated that reports of British designs have much disturbed the Sultan, and that foreign Representatives who have Vali is confident that if your Excellency were to approach the Sultan on the subject personally, His Majesty would welcome such an opportunity of frankly discussing the matter and arriving at a friendly settlement.

He himself is advocating such a settlement in a report which he is about to send in.

Inclosure 2 in No. 86.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 23.)

Sir,

Bussorah, May 3, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 21 of the 32nd ultimo, I have the honour to report that Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit has recently imposed an import duty of 5 per cent. *ad valorem* on all goods arriving in his country. Hitherto merchandize imported into Koweit from Bussorah or other Turkish ports was exempted from such duty on presentation of a certificate from a Turkish custom-house, but the Sheikh now declines to recognize the certificates and claims duty from all imports, whatever be their origin.

I learn that the Mudir of the Bussorah Custom-house has complained to the Vali of this proceeding on the part of Sheikh. Hamdi Pasha, in reply, begged the Mudir to let the question be for the moment, and allow him to get settled in his new post and make himself acquainted with all the circumstances of the case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 87

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 61.)

(Telegraphic) P.

Foreign Office, June 16, 1899.

KOWLEIT. I approve course proposed in your despatch No. 292, Secret. As regards the warning to the Sheikh, I am communicating with Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India.

No. 88.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 144 Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 17, 1899.

I RECEIVED and communicated to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India your Excellency's despatch No. 259, Secret, of the 24th ultimo, forwarding a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah relative to Koweit, and suggesting that the Turkish Government should be warned, in the event of their taking steps to give active support to the claims of Sheikh Mubarak's nephews, that Her Majesty's

I transmit to you a copy of a letter which has been received from the India Office on the subject.

In view of what your Excellency states in your further despatch No. 292 of the 6th instant, I authorize you to refrain for the present from addressing any warning to the Porte in regard to Koweit, and to instruct Mr. Wratislaw to make a communication to the Vali of Bussorah in the sense suggested by you, when occasion offers.

I will communicate a copy of your despatch No. 292 to the Secretary of State for India, and will suggest that he should arrange for a message to be sent to the Sheikh of Koweit enjoining caution in his action and language.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 89

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir

Foreign Office, June 17, 1899.

WITH reference to your letter of the 7th instant, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you a copy of a despatch which his Lordship has received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of Koweit.

In view of what is stated in Sir N. O'Conor's despatch, Lord Salisbury has authorized his Excellency, in a despatch of which a copy is also inclosed,† to refrain for the present from addressing any warning to the Porte in regard to Koweit, and to instruct Mr. Wratislaw to make a communication to the Vali of Bussorah in the sense proposed by his Excellency.

I am to suggest, for the consideration of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, that he should arrange for a message to be sent to the Sheikh of Koweit enjoining caution in his action and language.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 90.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 22.)

Sir,

India Office, June 21, 1899.

WITH reference to your letter of the 25th February last, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to forward, to be laid before the Marquess of Salisbury, a copy of a

* No. 8.

† No. 80.

‡ No. 60.

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letter from the Government of India, transmitting a Report by Colonel Meade on the circumstances in which he landed at Koweit on the 21st January last, notwithstanding the protest of an Arab, who was understood to be the representative of the Ottoman Sanitary authority.

Lord George Hamilton concurs in the view of Colonel Meade's proceedings by the Government of India.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 90.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Secret.)

My Lord,

Simla, June 1, 1899.

WITH reference to your Lordship's Secret despatch dated the 10th March last, we have the honour to forward a Report by Lieutenant-Colonel Meade, relative to the complaint preferred by the Sanitary officer at Koweit against the alleged action of the Commander of the Royal Indian Marine steamer "Lawrence."

We consider that the proceedings of Colonel Meade and the officers with him were in no way open to exception, and that the objections raised by the so-called Sanitary authority at that port, who was a local Arab, were both illegal and frivolous.

We have, &c.
(Signed) CURZON OF KEDLESTON,
W. S. A. LOCKHART
E. H. H. COLLEN.
C. M. RIVAZ
C. E. DAWKINS.
T. RALLIGH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 90.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, May 7, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Confidential letter of the 13th April last, and inclosure, and, as directed, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Government of India, that the complaint evidently refers to the occasion, reported in my letter dated the 30th January last, when I visited Koweit on the 21st January, not the 9th, as stated in the telegram of the 5th February, from the Sanitary officer at Bassorah, a copy of which accompanies your letter.

2. I inclose copies of (1) a letter I have received from the Commander of the "Lawrence"; and (2) a statement made by Mr. J. C. Gaskin, Extra Assistant Resident and Vice-Consul at Bushire, who landed on the 21st January, and, in accordance with my directions, had an interview with Sheikh Mubarak.

3. The entire responsibility for what they did rests with me. I foresaw that some attempt to stop them would be made on the ground of quarantine, and, after a consultation with Captain Hore, I.M.S., who is in charge of the quarantine arrangements here, and the Commander of the "Lawrence," decided that any protest made against their landing on the ground of there being quarantine against the "Lawrence" should be disregarded.

4. I arrived at this decision for the following reasons: on two similar previous occasions Captain O. Baker, the Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf, successfully resisted an attempt by Turkish agents to prevent his landing on the ground of quarantine, though his ship, the "Sphinx," was not from an infected port; and as regards the official at Koweit, Captain Baker had reported that he considered he was not a regular quarantine officer, but a spy. Beyond this reference to quarantine at Koweit, I did not think that Captain Baker's views were in support of a contention that it did.

Turkey. In
General Rules formulated

Venice Convention is, of course, guided by
is would not have

put into question. I considered, therefore, that any attempt by local officials to prevent our landing would be contrary to the Rules of the Venice Convention, and would not be supported by the Sanitary Board at Constantinople.

There was nothing in the condition of Bushire, or in that of the "Lawrence," to make me hesitate about landing on the ground that we might convey disease to Koweit, and there was nothing to show me that regular quarantine existed, as no signals were hoisted, and no one came off to examine the ship. From Captain Baker's Report referred to, the person representing quarantine arrangements at Koweit is not a regular officer, and this is borne out by the statement of Mr. Gaskin, who describes him as an ordinary Arab.

5. In short, I came to the conclusion before communicating with the shore that no effective or regular quarantine existed at Koweit, and that even if it did, there was nothing in the Rules of the Venice Convention to prevent our communicating with the shore, either from the state of the port from which we had last come, or of the "Lawrence." Such being the case, I felt I ought not to allow any frivolous objections to stand in the way of my carrying out the orders I had received.

6. It is, I think, quite clear from the reports of the officers who landed that no force whatever was employed, and I trust that, under the circumstances mentioned, my proceedings, as well as my own, may be approved.

7. It may perhaps not be out of place to express a hope that, if the Turks are allowed to maintain quarantine at Koweit, steps may be taken to prevent their employing it as a means to prevent our communicating with the Sheikh. I gather that quarantine arrangements at Koweit under the Sanitary Board at Constantinople will in no way imply that the Turks have any sort of jurisdiction or rights at Koweit, and that the independence of Koweit will not be allowed to be prejudiced by such arrangements. It will, however, be necessary to see that this is clearly understood, and that the Turkish officials are made to adhere strictly to the Regulations drawn up by the Venice Convention.

Inclosure 3 in No. 90.

The Commander, R.I.M.S. "Lawrence," to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade.

May 5, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th April last, and inclosure, and, as directed, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Government of India, that the complaint evidently refers to the occasion, reported in my letter dated the 30th January last, when I visited Koweit on the 21st January, not the 9th, as stated in the telegram of the 5th February, from the Sanitary officer at Bassorah, a copy of which accompanies your letter.

2. I inclose copies of (1) a letter I have received from the Commander of the "Lawrence"; and (2) a statement made by Mr. J. C. Gaskin, Extra Assistant Resident and Vice-Consul at Bushire, who landed on the 21st January, and, in accordance with my directions, had an interview with Sheikh Mubarak.

3. The entire responsibility for what they did rests with me. I foresaw that some attempt to stop them would be made on the ground of quarantine, and, after a consultation with Captain Hore, I.M.S., who is in charge of the quarantine arrangements here, and the Commander of the "Lawrence," decided that any protest made against their landing on the ground of there being quarantine against the "Lawrence" should be disregarded.

4. I arrived at this decision for the following reasons: on two similar previous occasions Captain O. Baker, the Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf, successfully resisted an attempt by Turkish agents to prevent his landing on the ground of quarantine, though his ship, the "Sphinx," was not from an infected port; and as regards the official at Koweit, Captain Baker had reported that he considered he was not a regular quarantine officer, but a spy. Beyond this reference to quarantine at Koweit, I did not think that Captain Baker's views were in support of a contention that it did.

Inclosure 4 in No. 90.

Statement by Vice-Consul Gaskin.

We arrived at Koweit in the Royal In "Lawrence" on the 21st January last, and soon afterwards the Res wished me to go and convey his compliments to the Sheikh, expressing at the same time a hope that he might soon have the pleasure of meeting him.

I know Arabic, and visited Koweit in September 1897, when I had several interviews with Sheikh Mubarak, and on that visit a fairly well-dressed Arab, apparently a native of Bassorah, was pointed out to me as being the representative of the quarantine authorities at Bassorah. He was not a doctor, and in no way interfered with my landing or stated that quarantine was in force there, but he followed me wherever I went.

On the occasion now referred to, I went with Commander Kendall, of the "Lawrence," in one of the ship's boats. When we approached the shore, the same Arab mentioned in the above paragraph came down to the landing-place, and told us not to land, as it was against the orders of the Ottoman Government. As it had seemed that we were not to allow ourselves to be prevented from landing by any such protests, I told the man that he had now performed his duty and should allow us to land, as there was no reason why we should not do so, that we had no plague on board the "Lawrence," and had come from a healthy port, Bushire. We then landed, and he retired. No force was used, and none was necessary.

When we were with the Sheikh, the Captain of the Turkish corvette, the "Zohaf," came to the Sheikh's house, and expressed his surprise that we had landed against Quarantine Regulations.

(Signed) J. C. GASKIN,
in Assistant to the Political Resident, Persian Gulf.

Bushire, May 7, 1899

No. 91

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June

Sir,

India Office, June 21, 1899.

IN continuation of my letter, dated the 7th June last, relative to affairs at Koweit, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward a copy of a letter from the Government of India, dated the 1st June last.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 91

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Secret.)

My Lord,

Simla, June 1, 1899.

WITH reference to the correspondence ending with your Lordship's Secret despatch, dated the 30th March last, we have the honour to forward copies of further letters from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, regarding the affairs of Koweit and the position of the Sheikh.

2. We remit, for the decision of Her Majesty's Government, Lieutenant-Colonel Meade's suggestion that diplomatic action should be taken with a view to an early understanding with the Porte in respect to the status of Koweit. The position at Bassorah appears to be such that, should no understanding of this nature be arrived

at, serious complications may at no distant date ensue between the local Turkish authorities and ourselves.

We have, &c.
(Signed) CURZON OF KEDLESTON.
W. S. A. LOCKHART
E. H. H. COLLEN
C. M. RIVAZ
C. E. DAWKINS
T. RALEIGH

Inclosure 2 in No. 91.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India, April 30, 1899

[See Inclosure in No. 85.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 91

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, May 7, 1899.

IN continuation of my letter, dated the 30th April, I have the honour to forward, by last mail, which Mr. Wratislaw, British Consul at Bassorah, has addressed to Sir N. R. O'Connor, G.C.B., Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

2. It will be seen from this letter, that the reappointment of Hamdi Pasha, as Wali of Bassorah, is regarded by Mr. Wratislaw as likely to affect the position of Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit, and I hear that the Pasha may ere long take up the cause of the nephews against their uncle, by encouraging them to obtain possession of the Fao estates through the Bassorah Courts. It is considered likely, too, that Sheikh Jassim, Khan of Kate, Yusuf-bin-Hudum of Dora and the Sheikhs of Siammer will be induced to take some action against Mubarak, to whom they are hostile.

The verdict of the Bassorah Court will probably be against Mubarak, and in that case the Wali may send troops to Fao to enforce it, should the Sheikh apply to us for help, as he probably will do. I do not think, however, that any action will be taken before the date harvest.

4. An attack, too, on Koweit, by the Sheikhs I have mentioned is possible, and, if pressed home, would give rise to a state of things there which might afford an excuse to the Turks for active interference. If they intervened successfully, it would mean an occupation by them of Koweit, from which it would be difficult, later on, to expel them, and I think, therefore, that we should not only be prepared to effectually forbid an attack on Koweit, but should also, as recommended in my previous letter, commence diplomatic action with the Turkish Government, and, if possible, come to an understanding with the Porte regarding the status of the Rulers of Koweit.

5. I was not aware of the recognition by the Porte of Sheikh Mubarak, referred to by Mr. Wratislaw, or that he had been given the title of Kaimakam. It will, however, be seen from my telegram of the 10th September, 1897, to you, and from the correspondence forwarded to me under cover of your endorsement, dated the 13th September, 1897, that previous Sheikhs appear to have received such recognition, which has not, I gather, been considered as materially affecting their independence at Koweit itself.

6. As regards the status of the present Sheikh, there is no doubt that he endeavoured, after the death of his brother, to obtain the recognition of the Sultan, and his overtures to us in 1897, were probably due to the fact that his nephews had obtained the support of the local Turkish authorities at Bassorah. Had we then been in a position to at once offer him our protection, he would, I believe, have had no further dealings with the Turks: but, at that time, Her Majesty's Government were not disposed to bring Koweit under British protection, or to interfere with its affairs. It was necessary for the general peace of the Persian Gulf that the Sheikh's

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advances were not responded to, and he seems, in consequence, to have endeavoured to strengthen his position by spending money freely at Constantinople.

7. It is possible that he has, as stated by Mr Wratislaw, accepted the title of Kaimakam from the Turkish Government, but my assistant, Mr. Gaskin, informs me that the Sheikh told him, when we went to Koweit in January, that, though he had been offered the title, he had not accepted it. The Sheikh said nothing to me on the subject, and appeared to think that he was quite free to enter into an engagement with us. I do not recollect Mr. Gaskin mentioning the matter at the time, and he seems to have thought that it was only said to enhance the Sheikh's own importance in the negotiations he was carrying on with us. I think now, however, that the offer of the post of Kaimakam, and the recognition by the Porte, whether accepted or not by Mubarak, had a good deal to say to the insistence of his brothers as to the terms of the protection we were to offer them. They had, no doubt, spent considerable sums in obtaining something from the Turks, and were reluctant to endanger it, until they knew for certain what we would and could do for them.

8. It would certainly have been more satisfactory if we could have come to an arrangement about Koweit in 1897, before the Sheikh was offered Turkish recognition, but I am of opinion that neither he nor his predecessors have considered that any recognition or title bestowed by the Sultan affects their independent position at Koweit itself, and that the title of Kaimakam, when accepted, has been chiefly regarded as referring to their estates in Turkey, the possession of which is undoubtedly a source of weakness to them, as they are liable to be constantly harassed in regard to those properties by Turkish officials. They consider, probably, that the title of Kaimakam gives them an official position in return, and enables them to meet official attacks. Sheikh Mubarak was well aware that whatever recognition he might have received from the Sultan, would be of little avail if it failed the Turks to support his

support. There is no doubt, too, that whatever may have been done to reassure the Sheikh by offering him recognition and a title, the Turks have, for some time, been waiting for a favourable opportunity to interfere actively in Koweit affairs, with the object of completely absorbing it in the Turkish Empire. This will be the ultimate object of their interference whatever side they take.

9. The questions arising out of the relations of the Sheikhs of Koweit with ourselves and with the Turks will have to be settled between the two Governments, but I may mention certain points which seem to deserve attention. We have, in the first place, never admitted the rights of Turkey over Koweit, and have now an agreement

which always make it extremely difficult for the Turks to attack the place itself, but to resist such an attack would mean a rupture with Turkey, and involve serious consequences, which Her Majesty's Government would, no doubt, wish to avoid. Our interests in the Persian Gulf, however, make it well nigh impossible that we should allow Turkey or any other Power, or its subjects, to obtain a foothold at Koweit, which may become the eastern terminus of a railway on the shortest route to India. Its natural advantages and good harbour are all such that it will affect us seriously if it ever falls into other hands, and we should be prepared to sacrifice much before we relinquish our interest in the place. On the other hand, however, it cannot be denied that the Turks have, for some time, regarded Koweit as lying within their sphere of influence, and have extended their authority to, Koweit, nor have they ever had an effective occupation of it; but they do occupy, with our tacit consent, places further down the Arab coast.

10. While then we are justified in maintaining the independence of Koweit, and in opposing opposition from Turkey, and may have some difficulty in coming to terms with her. I have ventured, therefore, to recommend that negotiations with the Porte should not be delayed, and I think that, while they are pending, we should keep at least one gun-boat ready at this end of the Gulf, to stop any attempt by the Turkish authorities at Bussorah to send a force by sea. The Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf should receive definite instructions as to the steps to be taken, under certain circumstances; but this may have already been done by his Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief. Great care will be necessary, as it will not be possible to interfere with the movement of Turkish troops until sufficient proof is forthcoming of their real destination. Even after a force has left the Shat-el-Arab, it may be asserted that it is on its

way to El Katr, or some other place on the Arab coast. It is very desirable that an attack on Koweit should be prevented; but, at the same time, any premature collision, which could not be fully justified afterwards, ought to be avoided. I do not anticipate any movements being made for some time to come, but the interests involved are considerable, and it is best to be prepared for all eventualities. One gun-boat, the "Lapwing," is now in the Shat-el-Arab, and should, I think, be kept there, or at Bussorah, for the present.

11. It would also perhaps be advisable to have a secret news-agent at Koweit on a small salary of 30 rupees per mensem to keep us informed of anything going on there.

Inclosure 4 in No. 91.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor, April 23, 1899.

[See Inclosure in No. 83.]

Inclosure 5 in No. 91.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India.

Bussorah, May 14, 1899

In continuation of my letter dated the 7th May last, about Koweit affairs, I have forwarded, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of another letter from the Consul at Bussorah to our Ambassador at Constantinople, which Mr. Wratislaw has sent to me.

2. I will endeavour to ascertain the facts of the imposition of an import duty by the Turks on the subject. The Sheikh told me that he intended to introduce a regular Customs Department, but I was not aware that he proposed taking any steps in that direction for some time to come, and his putting on an import duty against Turkish ports may precipitate some action against him on the part of the Turkish authorities, who are, the Commander of the "Lawrence" reports, engaged in increasing the accommodation at Fao Port. It is difficult to get any accurate information as to what is going on at that place, but Lieutenant-Commander Kendall says he could see from the ship that there were several tents pitched near the fort, and work of some sort was in progress.

3. The Sheikh of Mohammerah, who is closely connected with Sheikh Mubarak, told Lieutenant-Commander Lambert, of Her Majesty's ship "Lapwing," when he was up the river a few days ago, that it was reported among the Turks and Arabs that Sheikh Mubarak had applied to the British for protection, but it was not known what answer he had received. Sheikh Khazal tried to find out from Commander Lambert, who could not give him any information. The Sheikh said that the Turks would probably endeavour to ruin Mubarak, but would not attack him themselves. He thought they were endeavouring to incite various other Arab Sheikhs, particularly the powerful Sheikh of Nejd, to attack Koweit, and that troubles fomented in this way are long, which would give the Turks an excuse for

4. It is further stated that the Turks are not at present in a position to make any movement, as they are occupied in putting down an insurrection which has broken out somewhere up the river between Bussorah and Bagdad. If the news is correct, it is not likely that an expedition against Koweit will be undertaken for some time to come.

Inclosure 6 in No. 91.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor, May 3, 1899.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 86.]

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No. 92.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 23.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 22nd June, respecting Koweit affairs.

India Office, June 22, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 92

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic)

India Office, June 30, 1899.

YOUR letter, dated the 1st June.

Lord Salisbury has authorized O'Connor to refrain at present from warning Porte regarding Koweit, and to instruct Wratislaw to hint to Governor-General, Hamdi Pasha, that the British Government is desirous of maintaining the status quo. He also desires a message should be sent to Sheikh of Koweit, enjoining caution in his language and actions. Please arrange this.

No. 93.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 6.)

Sir,

India Office, July 5, 1899.

IN continuation of previous correspondence ending with your letter of the 21st March last, on the subject of Colonel Meade's action in regard to the negotiation of the Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to forward, for the information of the Marquess of Salisbury, a copy of a despatch which his Lordship addressed to the Government of India on the subject, and of their reply.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODFREY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 93.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton.

(Secret.)

My Lord,

Simla, June 8, 1899.

WITH reference to your Lordship's Secret despatch dated the 30th March last, in which you state that the Government of India have the honour to forward, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, a copy of a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Meade, recounting the circumstances in which a proviso was inserted in the Secret Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit, binding the Sheikh not to receive the Agent or Representative of any other Power or Government without the previous sanction of the British Government.

Copy of your Lordship's letter to which Colonel Meade's reply is also inclosed.

We have, &c.
(Signed) OURZON OF KEDLESTON.
W. S. A. LOCKHART.
C. M. RIVAZ.
C. E. DAWKINS.
T. RALEIGH.
R. GARDINER

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Inclosure 2 in No. 93

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Bushire, May 21, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 29th April last, on the subject of the Secret Agreement recently made with the Sheikh of Koweit, and, in doing so, I would explain, for the information of the Government of India, that the clause in the Agreement by which the Sheikh promises not to receive the Representatives of other Powers without the previous sanction of the British Government was inserted, as I understood such to be the wish of Sheikh Mubarak himself, conveyed to me by my assistant Mr. Gaskin, who told me that the Sheikh did not want to have Agents from other Powers residing at Koweit, and would gladly agree to refuse his consent to such arrangements without a reference to the British Government.

2. As a clause to this effect would be useful later on, and seemed calculated to strengthen our position at Koweit—and as a similar proviso had been inserted in the Agreement of the 22nd December, 1880, with Sheikh Eza, of Bahrein, vide Agreement No. XXXI, Aitchison's Treaties, vol. x, p. 120, when the Bahrein Sheikh agreed to refuse permission to any other Government than the British to establish Diplomatic or Consular Agencies in his territory unless with the consent of the British Government—I thought the opportunity was a good one to obtain a similar promise from Sheikh Mubarak, as he himself wished to give it.

3. I do not think the proviso is likely to give rise to any trouble, as the Sheikh will not have one, and he will probably be able to prevent the appointment being made without any sort of reference to the stipulation in the Agreement with us. In the meantime your instructions will be carefully attended to, and any information indicating that the Porte, or any other Power, wishes to send an Agent to Koweit, will be communicated to you without delay. No action, too, will be taken in the matter without your instructions.

4. As Sheikh Mubarak wishes the money we agreed to pay him sent via Bahrein, it will be taken there by the "Lawrence," which leaves this for Bombay on the 26th instant, and will be left either with the Sheikh's Agent, or, if he has not yet returned to Bahrein, with the Residency Agent, who will in due course make it over to the Sheikh's Representative. I would request your instructions as to how this payment is to be shown in the accounts of the Bushire Treasury; and would suggest that it should appear as a Secret Service payment, and that the Comptroller of India Government of India.

5. Mr. McDouall, Vice-Consul at Mohammurah, informs me that there is no probability of any Turkish movement being made at present against Koweit; and he thinks that the rumours on the subject, which have been current of late, have no real foundation, but merely represent what people expect will happen. "Every one," he writes, "believes that the Turks will move against Koweit some day." Nothing tangible, too, is, I believe, known as to the Sheikh's negotiations with ourselves; but there seems to be a general impression that he has been endeavouring to obtain our protection, and that we have not been averse to receiving his advances.

6. From information I have recently received, I am inclined to think that Sheikh Mubarak has not received any formal recognition from the Sultan, or the title of Kaisar-kam, as mentioned in Mr. Wratislaw's letter to the Ambassador at Constantinople. I am, however, not sure of this, and will ask him to verify its correctness.

* The "Lawrence" has started since this was written and taken 15,000 rupees.

Inclosure 3 in No. 93.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade

(Confidential.)

Simla, April 29, 1899.

WITH reference to the correspondence ending with your telegram of the 19th February last, regarding the Secret Agreement with the Sheikh of Kuwait, I am directed to inform you that Her Majesty's Government approve the action taken by you in the matter.

2. The Secretary of State for India has observed that, inasmuch as you were instructed to conclude an Agreement similar to that which exists with the Sultan of Muscat, you were not directly authorized to stipulate that the Sheikh should not receive Representatives from any Power or Government without the previous sanction of the British Government. Nevertheless, as the proviso has been introduced, Her Majesty's Government have decided that it shall remain in force. But I am to point out to you that its operation, more especially with regard to the relations of the Sheikh with the Turkish Government, will require to be very carefully watched. Should circumstances arise, or appear likely to arise, in which the stipulation itself may be called in question, I am to request that a Report may be promptly made to the Government of India, whose instructions should be awaited before any action is taken.

No. 94.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 1.

WITH reference to my letter of the 17th ultimo, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you the decypher of a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* relative to the claims of the nephew of the Sheikh of Kuwait.

Lord Salisbury proposes, if Lord George Hamilton concurs, to approve Sir N. O'Connor's proposed instructions to Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

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Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 323. Secret.)

My Lord,

ON receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 84 of the 17th ultimo, I authorized Mr. Wratislaw by telegraph to warn, if he thought it necessary, the Vali of Bussorah that any molestation of the Sheikh of Kuwait would be likely to involve him in trouble, and at the same time I told him in a private letter to let the Vali understand that an expedition against Kuwait would certainly be regarded with displeasure by Her Majesty's Government.

It is worth noting, with regard to the Vali, that he has not received a punitive expedition, while it will perhaps encourage him to report fully to the Sultan on the situation of affairs.

In Mr. Wratislaw's despatch No. 27, a copy of which I have the honour to enclose herewith to your Lordship, he says that he does not think Hamdi Pasha would have been so confident of success in his expedition to Kuwait, had he had a frank understanding with Her Majesty's Government respecting Kuwait, unless he had previously received authority to do so from the Sultan. I am inclined to agree in this view, and I hope it may be true, for I should be very glad if the Vali's representations induce the Sultan to broach the subject.

* No. 27, Secret, July 5, 1899

I have no means of forming an opinion as to what the Sultan is likely to do, but in view of the probability of his approaching me on the subject, I should be glad to have your Lordship's instructions as to the language I should hold. I consider anything in the nature of a categorical declaration of the independence of Kuwait would bring the discussion to a deadlock at once, and make the Sultan appeal to the other Ambassadors for guidance as to his line of action, and leave the question, as far as we are concerned, much in its present condition.

If it might be possible, however, to arrive at some result if, while avoiding as far as possible a definite statement respecting the independence of Kuwait, I said that Her Majesty's Government could not be indifferent to what passed there owing to our commercial and political interests in the Persian Gulf, but that if His Majesty formally undertook not to cede any of his rights in those parts to any other Power, I thought it would be a satisfactory arrangement for both Governments, and be likely to remove any cause of uneasiness in regard to the future.

If His Majesty decides upon speaking to me, he will be prepared for some proposal of this sort, and in any case it will seem more or less the natural consequence of his own remarks, and obviate some of the objections to my broaching the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR

Inclosure in No. 95.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 27. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bussorah, June 8, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to report that in the course of conversation to-day the Vali, Hamdi Pasha, introduced the subject of Kuwait.

He informed me that the Sultan was much disturbed by reports concerning the designs of Great Britain on that place, and that foreign Representatives at Constantinople (those of Russia, France, Germany) took every opportunity of working on his suspicions and imputing to Her Majesty's Government all manner of nefarious intentions. He, Hamdi Pasha, was well aware how vital it was to Great Britain that no foreign Power should obtain possession of this, the only decent port in the Persian Gulf, and he was

His Majesty would gladly embrace the opportunity of clearing up all misunderstandings and coming to an agreement satisfactory to both countries.

The Vali further informed me that he was about to address a Report on the subject of Kuwait to Constantinople, in which he would advocate a friendly understanding with Great Britain as the best solution of the difficulty, and begged me to inform your Excellency of his views and intentions. I readily undertook to do so.

His Excellency also states that Russia, France, and Germany all had designs of their own on Kuwait.

The above remarks were made quite spontaneously, as I have hitherto avoided the subject of Kuwait in my interviews with Hamdi Pasha. The latter spoke so confidently of the Sultan's readiness to arrive at a frank and friendly understanding with your Excellency that I am inclined to think he must have some authority other than his personal opinion for this view of the matter.

I propose to telegraph to your Excellency the substance of this despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. O. WRATISLAW.

No. 96.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 330. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, July 6, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 228, Secret, of to-day, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her

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Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, offering proof of the official appointment by the Ottoman Government of Sheikh Mubarak as Kaimakam of Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 96.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 26. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bussorah, June 2, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency No. 21, of the 22nd April last, I have the honour to forward herewith the copy of a letter which I have received from the Resident and Consul-General at Bushire, throwing doubt on my statement that Sheikh Mubarak was appointed by the Sultan as Kaimakam of Koweit, and also a copy of my reply thereto.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW

Inclosure 2 in No. 96.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Consul Wratislaw.

(No. 240. Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, May 30, 1899.

WITH reference to your letter No. 23, dated the 3rd instant, to the address of the Ambassador at Constantinople, I have the honour to request that you will kindly let me know how you obtained your information that Sheikh Mubarak has received formal recognition from the Sultan and been given the title of Kaimakam.

I did not know that formal recognition and appointment as Kaimakam had been carried out as regards Mubarak, and as other information I have does not point to it, I should be obliged if you will kindly verify its correctness as far as you can, and let me know the result.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. J. MEADE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 96.

Consul Wratislaw to Lieutenant-Colonel Meade.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Bussorah, June 2, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, requesting me to inform you how I obtained my information that Sheikh Mubarak had received formal recognition by the Sultan and been given the title of Kaimakam, and to state, in reply, that my information is based on a Report of the Dragoman of this Consulate, dated the 8th December, 1897, and filed in my archives to the following effect:—

"A telegraphic communication was received by Mouham Pasha (then Acting Vali) four or five days ago, from the Sublime Porte, stating that an Imperial Irade had been issued sanctioning the appointment of Sheikh Mubarak-al-Sabah as official Kaimakam of Koweit."

Further, Mubarak's name is given as Kaimakam of Koweit in the official Salname (Almanack) of the Vilayet of Bussorah amongst the other Government functionaries of the vilayet; his correspondence with the Turkish authorities is addressed to him as Kaimakam; and he receives 150 karas of dates per annum from the Turkish Government in lieu of salary, as did his predecessors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

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No. 97.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 100)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 11, 1899.

I HAVE communicated to the Secretary of State for India copies of your Excellency's despatches No. 52 of the 15th February, and No. 59, of the 18th February, relative to the landing of a party from Her Majesty's ship "Lawrence," at Koweit, on the 21st January last, under instructions from the British Resident at Bushire, notwithstanding the protest of an Arab who represented himself to be acting under the orders of the Ottoman Sanitary authorities.

I transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter from the India Office, inclosing a Report by Colonel Meade on the matter.*

Your Excellency is authorized to inform Dr. Dekson that Her Majesty's Government consider Colonel Meade's explanations to be satisfactory.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 98.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 12, 1899.

WITH reference to my letter of the 17th ultimo I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, on the subject of Koweit †

to request that Lord George Hamilton will favour Lord Salisbury with his observations on Sir N. O'Connor's despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 99

India Office to Foreign Office.

Sir,

India Office, July 14, 1899.

I AM directed by Lord George Hamilton to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 8th July, inclosing a telegraphic despatch, dated the 5th July, from Sir N. O'Connor. The instructions, which Sir N. O'Connor proposes to give, seem to the Secretary of State for India to be judicious, and deserving of approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

No. 100

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 19.)

Sir,

India Office, July 18, 1899.

I AM directed by Lord George Hamilton to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 14th July, inclosing a despatch, dated the 11th July, on the subject of Koweit. The language which Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople should adopt if the subject of Koweit is broached by the Sultan.

The Secretary of State for India recognizes the difficulties to which a declaration of the independence of Koweit might give rise, and the advantages which, for the moment, might be gained by a formal undertaking that Turkey shall not cede any of her rights in

* No. 21.

† No. 95

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the Persian Gulf to any other Power except the British. But it must be borne in mind that our engagement to extend good offices to the Sheikh and his successors, so long as he adheres to his agreement not to receive the Agents of any other Power, or to cede or assign any part of his territories, proceeds upon the assumption that the Sheikh is independent of Turkey, and is entitled to seek British protection. There seems then, considerable risk in adopting any course which would admit any territorial right of Turkey in Koweit, and so far compromise British action in the event of the Sheikh appealing to us for our good offices under the Agreement lately concluded and approved by Her Majesty's Government.

Under these circumstances, Lord George Hamilton would express the opinion that, whatever language Sir N. O'Connor may be instructed to employ, it should in no wise be such as to hamper the British Government in giving effect hereafter to the obligations incurred under the Agreement, if the occasion for such action should arise.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

No. 101.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

(Telegraphic) P. *Foreign Office, July 19, 1899.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 27, Secret, of the 5th instant respecting the request of a brother of the Sheikh of Koweit for the good offices of Her Majesty's Consul at Basra in a question of inheritance.

I approve the instructions which you propose to send to Mr. Wratislaw.

No. 102.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received July 24.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July 19, 1899.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 330, Secret, of the 6th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Basra stating that he has been furnished by the Vali with a Memorandum showing the amount of the salaries drawn by the subordinate Governors of the vilayet amongst whom the name of the "Kaimakam of Koweit" appears.

The object of the Vali's communication was, no doubt, to show the dependence of the Sheikh upon Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

Inlosure in No. 102

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 28.)

Sir, *Basra, June 3, 1899.*
WITH reference to my despatch No. 26 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to report that since that date I have been furnished by the Vali with a Memorandum showing the salaries drawn by the Mutessarifs and Kaimakams in this vilayet, amongst whom the Kaimakam of Koweit figures for 2,800 piastres per month. I presume, therefore, that the payment in dates has been suppressed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 103

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 180.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 19, 1899.*
WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 328, Secret, of the 11th instant, I transmit to you herewith, for your guidance, a copy of a letter from the India Office containing observations as to the course to be pursued with regard to Koweit, and as to the action to be held by your Excellency, should the subject be broached by the Sheikh.

I authorize you to speak in the sense proposed in your above-mentioned despatch, if the occasion offers, subject to the limitations indicated in the letter from the India Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 104.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received August 21)

(No. 402. Secret.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August 17, 1899.*
I HAVE the honour to report that, in obedience to the directions contained in your Lordship's telegram No. 78 of the 31st ultimo, I at once instructed Her Majesty's Consul at Basra to communicate directly with Her Majesty's Consul-General at Basra on matters connected with Koweit, by the best means at his disposal, and to report at once to the Viceroy of India should any emergency arise requiring immediate action.

Mr. Wratislaw states, in reply, that according to official information which he has received, communication in cypher between his Consulate and Her Majesty's Consul-General at Basra is forbidden, though it is permitted with Her Majesty's Consul-General at Basra and with the Viceroy of India.

Mr. Wratislaw, will, I am sure, keep Colonel Meade regularly and promptly informed on any matter respecting Koweit. At the same time I venture to think it would be in the general interest to instruct Colonel Meade to give Mr. Wratislaw any information which may come to his knowledge. Apart from the importance to Mr. Wratislaw of knowing what is passing, it will enable him to control the information and to obtain further news and place him in a position to give early and trustworthy information to the Viceroy of India and to Her Majesty's Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

No. 105.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received August 26)

(No. 33.)

(Telegraphic) P. *Constantinople, August 26, 1899.*
I HAVE the honour to report, with reference to my despatch No. 381 of the 3rd instant, that I am informed by Her Majesty's Consul at Basra, that instructions have been received by the Vali to appoint a Harbour-master for the port of Koweit.

I have communicated this information to the Government of India.

No. 106.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secr
Sir

Foreign Office, August 30, 1899.

I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you, to be laid before Lord G. Hamilton, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* reporting that he has instructed Her Majesty's Consul at Bassorah to communicate directly with Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire on matters connected with Koweit by the best means at his disposal, and also to report at once to the Viceroy of India should any emergency arise requiring immediate action.

Sir N. O'Connor is of opinion that it would be advisable to instruct Her Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf to give Her Majesty's Consul at Bassorah any information which may come to his knowledge, and I am to suggest that instructions should be sent to Colonel Meade in the sense proposed by his Excellency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS BERTIE.

No. 107.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 2.)

WITH reference to Foreign Office letter of the 26th August, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy regarding the reported appointment of a Harbour-master at Koweit and dispatch of troops and artillery to Bassorah.

India Office, September 2, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 107.

Government of India to Lord G. Hamilton

(Telegraphic.)

September 2, 1899.

O'CONNOR'S telegram about Turkish Harbour-master for Koweit.

Meade will report fully after communicating with Sheikh.

Meade telegraphs, the 31st August, that he hears four infantry regiments and a battery of artillery are on the way to Bassorah, but it is not known if they are coming in relief.

No. 108.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 5.)

WITH reference to Foreign Office letter of the 30th August, the Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 2nd September, regarding affairs in the Persian Gulf.

India Office, September 4, 1899.

* No. 104.

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Inclosure in No. 108.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, September 2, 1899.

MY telegram of the 1st August.

Meade should be instructed to keep Consul at Bassorah supplied with any information he may receive about Koweit, or other important matters affecting that Consulate.

No. 109.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 6.)

(N

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 6, 1899.

I HAVE this morning received the following telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Basra:

"The Harbour-master of Basra left for Koweit yesterday to act as Harbour-master of that port (vide my telegram of the 23rd August).

"It is reported that an Ottoman customs will be established at Koweit by the Customs Inspector from Bagdad who is now here."

No. 110.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 7.)

Sir,

India Office, September 7, 1899.

I AM directed by Lord George Hamilton to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 6th inst. Constantinople reporting that the Vali of Bassorah has received instructions to appoint a Harbour-master at Koweit.

In reply, I am directed to request that you will draw the attention of the Marquess of Salisbury to Sir Arthur Godley's letter of the 18th July last; and in view of the embarrassment which may hereafter be caused by acquiescence in such an exercise of the rights of sovereignty by the Porte, I am to suggest, for Lord Salisbury's consideration, whether the time has not now arrived when the Turkish Government should be informed that Her Majesty's Government have entered into engagements with the Chief of Koweit as an independent Ruler, and that they are not disposed to recognize any infringement of that independence.

Should this course not commend itself to Lord Salisbury, Lord George Hamilton is of opinion that it would, at any rate, be advisable to give the Turkish Government to understand that the authority of a Harbour-master or other official appointed by the Vali of Bassorah, at Koweit, could not be recognized by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

HORACE WALPOLE.

No. 111.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 8.)

(No. 39)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 8, 1899.

MR. WRATISLAW telegraphs from Basra to-day with reference to his telegram of the 5th September, repeated to your Lordship in my telegram No. 38 of the 6th instant, that he learns that the military authorities are strongly in favour of occupying Koweit with an effective force.

He adds that the Harbour-master sent from the Koweit to Basra has returned, his landing having been forbidden by the Sheikh.

I have informed the Viceroy.

No. 112.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 87)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Foreign Office, September 8, 1899.

THE appointment of a Harbour-master and establishment of a custom-house at Koweit are not matters which we can recognize as depending upon the Porte.

Having regard to your telegram No. 38 of the 6th, it might be as well that you should lose no time in warning the Turkish Government that Her Majesty's Government, while having themselves no designs on Koweit, have friendly relations with the Sheikh of that place. Further, that a very inconvenient and disagreeable question would be raised if an attempt were made to establish Turkish authority or customs control at Koweit without previous agreement with Her Majesty's Government.

No. 113.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 8, 1899.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you, to be laid before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the accompanying telegraphic communication of the Porte to appoint a Harbour-master at Koweit.*

Their Lordships will remember that this place was reported in Sir N. O'Connor's despatch No. 381, of the 3rd ultimo (communicated to you on the 24th), to be one of the naval stations on the Persian Gulf which the Turkish Government intended to establish.

It will be seen from the inclosed telegrams that the Harbour-master at Busorah was sent by the Turkish Government to act in that capacity at Koweit, but that the Sheikh refused to allow him to land. It also appears that the Turkish military authorities are strongly advocating the military occupation of Koweit.

The Sheikh of Koweit is regarded by Her Majesty's Government as an independent Chief with whom they are in friendly relations, and Lord Salisbury is of opinion, after consultation with the Secretary of State for India, that it is desirable that one of Her Majesty's ships should be sent to Koweit for the protection of the Sheikh against any acts of overt aggression by the Turkish authorities.

I am accordingly to request you to move the Lords Commissioners to make immediate arrangements accordingly if they should see no objection.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 114.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 9, 1899.

WITH reference to my letter of the 8th instant, inclosing telegraphic communication to Her Majesty's Government respecting the attempt of the Porte to appoint a Harbour-master at Koweit, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to state, for the information of the Secretary of State for India, that he has requested the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send one of Her Majesty's ships to Koweit for the protection of the Sheikh against any acts of overt aggression by the Turkish authorities.

Lord Salisbury understands that this course is in accordance with Lord George Hamilton's views.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

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No. 115.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 11.)

Sir,

India Office, September 11, 1899.

I AM directed by Lord George Hamilton to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 9th September, stating that the Marquess of Salisbury has requested the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send one of Her Majesty's ships for the protection of the Sheikh of Koweit against any acts of overt aggression by the Turkish authorities.

In reply, I am to say that Lord George Hamilton concurs in the course followed by Lord Salisbury, and to inclose a copy of a telegram which he has dispatched to the Viceroy on the subject.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

Inclosure in No. 115.

Lord G. Hamilton to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, September 9, 1899.

Admiralty

overt aggression.

Inform Resident

No. 116.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 11.)

(No. 40)

(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, September 11, 1899.

HER Majesty's Consul telegraphs from Bursa under date of the 8th September, as follows.—

"I had a confidential conversation with the Vali to-day on the subject of the alleged military designs on Koweit. Though his Excellency refused at first to admit that he knew anything of these plans, his denials were faint, and he finally allowed that my information was accurate. I thereupon expressed a hope that he would use his influence to prevent any hostile attempt on Koweit could not fail to be regarded with grave dissatisfaction by Her Majesty's Government.

The Vali answered that the military authorities were entirely beyond his control, and that his advice was not asked in the matter. He admitted that in 1897 he had expressed himself in favour of the effective occupation of Koweit, and his advice in that sense was recorded in writing. He added that, although circumstances had doubtless changed since that time, he still believed that it was in the interest of Her Majesty's Government that the Turkish Government should be in a position firmly to control Koweit rather than that the place should be the object of the machinations of Powers other than Great Britain and possibly hostile to her.

"So far as I can learn there is no immediate danger of any decisive move being made in the matter for the present.

"The Vali, who begged that his remarks might be treated as confidential, again assured me that he considered a full understanding between Her Majesty's Government and the Porte on the subject of Koweit not only possible but desirable."

No. 116.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 12.)

(N. 116)

Constantinople, September 12, 1899.

With reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 87 of 6th September and No. 89 of 10th September, the Minister for Foreign Affairs has made the following statement to me, which he authorizes me to communicate to your Lordship.

The Imperial Government have no intention of establishing a Custom-house at Koweit, nor of occupying that place with a military force. They gave no instructions respecting the appointment of a harbour-master there, and that official was sent by the Minister of Marine and the Naval Commandant at Basra on their own initiative.

Whatever action the Turkish Government may contemplate in connection with Koweit, we shall have ample time to counteract it. It seems to me, therefore, that it is not in our interest to raise the question now, but to keep a careful watch on the proceedings of the Turks while we give our agreement with the Sheikh time to mature.

In view of these considerations, I doubt whether it is expedient to send a gun-boat to Koweit at this moment, more especially since the Sultan seems indisposed to sanction the Grand Vizier's promise respecting the towing of Messrs. Lynch's barges, and we to make some show of force to secure its fulfilment.

No. 117.

Foreign Office to Admiralty

(N. 117)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 13, 1899.

WITH reference to your letter of the 11th instant, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the accompanying decypher of a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople with regard to affairs at Koweit.

Their Lordships will observe that in the present circumstances Sir N. O'Connor doubts the expediency of sending a ship of war to Koweit, and I am accordingly to suggest that, if the Lords Commissioners see no objection, Her Majesty's ship "Sphinx" should simply call at that port and go on without making any stay.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 118.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received September 15.)

(N. 118)

Sir,

Admiralty, September 14, 1899.

WITH reference to your letter of the 13th instant and its inclosures, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to request you will inform the Secretary of State that, in compliance with his wish, telegraphic instructions were sent yesterday to the Commander-in-chief on the East Indies Station for Her Majesty's ship "Sphinx" merely to call at Koweit and not make any stay there at present.

I am, &c.

(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR

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No. 119.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 434. Secret.)

By

Constantinople, September 13, 1899.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 27, Secret, of the 5th July last, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, containing information which may serve to elucidate the respective claims of the descendants of Sabah, the late Sheikh of Koweit, to the property in dispute at Fao, and reporting a conversation with the Vali of Bussorah, in which Mr Wratislaw expressed the hope that Hamdi Pasha would soon be able to arrive at an equitable settlement of the question, which was one to which Her Majesty's Government were not indifferent.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR

Inclosure in No. 119

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor

(No. 36. Secret.)

Sir,

Bussorah, July 28, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 34 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to report that on receipt of your Excellency's telegram of the 22nd instant I at once endeavoured to put myself into communication with Hamoud, the younger brother of Sheikh Mubarek, of Koweit. I found, however, that he had not returned to Bussorah, and that he was understood to have gone back to Koweit after visiting some of the Sheikh's property down the river. I have no doubt, however, that he will hear I have been inquiring after him from Abdul Latif, who brought his message to me, and that the Sheikh will thus understand that I was ready to take an interest in his case.

I have not thought it advisable to communicate with either of them by letter.

I called on the Vali on the 26th instant, and introducing the subject of the division of the Koweit inheritance, expressed to his Excellency the hope that he would soon be able to arrive at an equitable settlement, as this was a question to which Her Majesty's Government were not indifferent. Hamdi Pasha replied that he should like nothing better than to wind up the affair, as the continual telegrams he received from Constantinople, in consequence of the nephews' appeals, gave him constant headaches. But he found it quite impossible to come to any just arrangement with Mubarek, who wanted to keep practically all for himself, and give the nephews a mere pittance. His proposals were to give the latter £ T 500 a-year out of the Fao property, to produce £ T 15,000 a-year, and also let them have the small property at Kou el Zou, nearer Bussorah. The latter is registered in the name of the late Sheikh Mohammed Pasha, while the Fao property is still in the name of Sheikh Sabah, the father and predecessor of Mohammed and Mubarek.

I asked his Excellency if it was not a fact that the nephews had entered a suit in the Sheri Court against Mubarek for the recovery of their shares, and he replied that that was so, but the Sheikh had declined to file an answer to it.

The Vali did not tell me, but I hear from elsewhere that he has sent one Abdullah-el-Musiri to Koweit to negotiate afresh with Mubarek on this question.

The division of the property. As your Excellency is aware, the law governing real

property is very complicated, and it is doubtful whether I am in full possession of the facts of the case. Even the existence of Hamoud was unknown to me till he appeared at Bussorah, and in view of the enormous harems kept up by the Arab aristocracy of this district, it is quite possible that there may be other claimants yet for shares in the succession. The Fao property was originally stolen by the Sheikh Sabah from another family, and is still registered in his name. He was succeeded by his son Abd Alla, who died a natural death (apparently leaving no heirs). Abdulla was succeeded by his brother Mohammed, who was created Knimakam and Pasha by the Sultan. Mohammed was murdered by

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Mubarek, along with another brother, Jerrah, and there are still two other brothers, Jabir and Hamoud, who adhere to Mubarek. The claimants at Bussorah are three sons of Mohammed and one son of Jerrah.

If Abdalla left no heirs, it would seem that the Fao property should be divided into five parts, one for each brother or his heirs, which would give the nephew two-fifths, or £T. 6,000 a-year instead of £T. 600, as offered by Mubarek. The property at Kout-el-Zein, and also, I believe, another small place at Gerdilan, being in Mohammed's name, should descend to his sons. But these are, I understand, of quite secondary importance.

All the estates, being in undoubted Turkish territory, are obviously under the jurisdiction of the Turkish Courts, and the Porte have treated Mubarek with surprising leniency in allowing him to laugh at the Tribunals and appropriate all the revenues of the properties for himself during three years. It is doubtful, however, whether the same leniency will be continued in future, and it would, indeed, be most unjust towards the nephews.

I should add that Hamdi Pasha expressed some surprise when I mentioned the interest which Her Majesty's Government take in the question, and I explained to him that Great Britain could be indifferent to nothing which went on in the Persian Gulf, where our interests are considerable. His Excellency replied that he was aware of this, and went on to enlarge on the importance of Koweit and the comparative weakness of its ruler.

I have not yet had an opening for administering a warning to the Vali personally as to his hostile action against Mubarek. To the best of my belief, his Excellency is at present, and I venture to suggest that I might be allowed to withhold the warning till I see indications of its being necessary. Hamdi Pasha is very touchy and short-tempered, and would certainly resent anything in the nature of an intimation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 120

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 440. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 13, 1899.

UPON visiting the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 11th instant, and after due consideration, I thought it well to take the opportunity presented by the appointment of a Harbour-master at Koweit to warn his Excellency in the sense of your Lordship's telegram No. 87 of the 8th instant.

I said that in view of the preponderant interests of Her Majesty's Government in the Persian Gulf we could not look with indifference on what passed at Koweit, with whose Ruler Her Majesty's Government entertained very friendly relations, and

imposing, without previous consultation, Ottoman officials upon the Sheikh, and still less of attempting to establish there, as had been recently reported, a custom-house or sending an armed force. Such proceedings were highly inexpedient, and as Her Majesty's Government had on their part no aggressive intentions, I advised his Excellency to avoid any steps calculated to raise a Koweit question.

His Excellency agreed that it would be impolitic to do so, and authorized me to inform your Lordship that as the Sheikh of Koweit had refused to receive the Ottoman Commissioner, and as the Ottoman Government had no authority to send a Commissioner to Bussorah without instructions from the Imperial Government, no further attempt would be made to insist upon the appointment.

As regarded the rumoured establishment of an Ottoman custom-house at that port or the dispatch of a military expedition, he could assure me the Government had no such intention, and upon my asking whether he authorized me to make this statement to Her Majesty's Government he replied in the affirmative.

His Excellency then went on to say that in 1897 the Vali of Bussorah had proposed to send an expedition against the Sheikh of Koweit, Mubarek, and to station a military force there, but that the Sultan had refused his sanction on the ground that the Sheikh possessed very little influence or territory, and that it was not worth the risk or expense.

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I informed his Excellency that I would communicate the assurances he had given to me to your Lordship, and I had the honour of doing so in my telegram No. 41 of the 12th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

No. 121.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 442. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 14, 1899.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 440, Confidential, of yesterday, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that Anthopoulos Pasha called upon me again this morning with an offer message from the Sultan to the following effect:—

His Imperial Majesty was much disturbed by the observations I had made on Monday, the 11th instant, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in reference to Koweit. His Majesty thought there must be some misunderstanding as to the tenor of my remarks, and he could not believe that Her Majesty's Government desired to interfere in any way with the sovereignty of the Sultan in regard to measures which he might take in Turkish territory.

I replied that Her Majesty's Government were in most friendly relations with the Ottoman Government, and that I did not believe that any hostile action taken against him

notice, any hostile action taken against him

I avoided the direct issue of the territorial dependency of the Sheikh, as I saw

nothing to be gained by raising the question before it was absolutely necessary, but I

endeavoured to leave no doubt on his Excellency's mind that we regarded his position

with peculiar interest. I said that I considered it better to be quite outspoken, and

that I should be well satisfied to see my Government in the Sultan's

view. I added that Her Majesty's Government were in most friendly relations

with the Ottoman Government, and that I did not believe that any hostile action taken against him

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that I should be well satisfied to see my Government in the Sultan's

view. I added that Her Majesty's Government were in most friendly relations

with the Ottoman Government, and that I did not believe that any hostile action taken against him

notice, any hostile action taken against him

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

No. 122.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 26, 1899.

WITH reference to the letter from this Office of the 6th July last and the 8th instant, I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State for India, the accompanying copies of three despatches from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople with regard to affairs in Koweit.*

Lord Salisbury proposes, if Lord George Hamilton concurs, to approve the language held by Sir N. O'Connor to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs and to Anthopoulo Pasha, as reported in his despatches Nos. 440 and 442 of the 13th and 14th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS BERTIE.

No. 123.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received October 2.)

(No. 442. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 15, 1899.

IN continuation of my immediately preceding despatch of yesterday's date I have the honour to report to your Lordship that, at the request of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I called yesterday at the Sublime Porte.

After a few remarks on other subjects his Excellency said that he had reported to His Imperial Majesty the communication made to him on the 11th instant in regard to Koweit, whereupon His Imperial Majesty had told him to see me at once and to inquire whether the attitude and language of Her Majesty's Government in this matter was not instigated by receipt of information that another Power was intriguing in those parts against Turkey.

His Excellency said he had replied that I had not alluded to any foreign intrigues during my interview with him, but that His Imperial Majesty nevertheless desired him to ask me the question.

His Excellency then went on to say, partly from the Sultan and partly on his own account, that Turkish sovereignty over the Nejd had been frequently asserted and invariably recognized, that in 1897 the Sultan had interfered to prevent the Sheikh Iassin continuing his attacks upon Koweit, as His Majesty desired to preserve peace and quiet in those regions, and that it would never do to allow this line of country to be divided one part from the other.

I replied that he was quite right in telling His Majesty that I had not alluded to any foreign Power in my conversation with him on the 11th instant, but that the Turkish claim of sovereignty on this coast was indefinite, and it was to be hoped that the Turkish Government would not interfere with the Sheikh of Koweit, with whom Her Majesty's Government had peculiarly friendly relations.

I reminded his Excellency that in 1883 Lord Granville, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, had informed Rustem Pasha, in connection with some pending difficulty, that the Turkish right of sovereignty over the El Katar Coast had never been admitted by Her Majesty's Government, and that I thought the Ottoman Government would do well not to raise a question now about Koweit.

His Excellency signified that he agreed in this view.

I thought it well to inform his Excellency of the message conveyed to me yesterday from the Sultan by Anthopoulo Pasha, and reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 442 of the 14th instant. His Excellency listened with attention, but made no confirmatory statement respecting the Sultan's readiness to co-operate under certain contingencies with Her Majesty's Government by armed force in protecting British interests in those parts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

* Nos. 115, 116, and 117.

No. 124.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received September 29.)

(No. 458.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 25, 1899.

I HAVE received a telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, of which the following is a paraphrase:—

"Vali has received instructions from the Grand Vixier to appoint a native of Koweit as Harbour-master there instead of a Turk.

"A small party of officers and soldiers has gone to Zobeir. This party has probably been sent in order to survey the road to Koweit, although their ostensible object is to visit a shrine."

The appointment of a native of Koweit as Harbour-master after the Sheikh's refusal to accept the official sent from Bussorah, and the reported surveying of the road show the determination of the Vali to assert Ottoman sovereignty, and, if necessary, to send an armed force to reduce the Sheikh to obedience.

These arrangements were made previous to my communication to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the 11th September.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 125.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 4.)

Sir,

India Office, October 3, 1899.

I AM desired by Lord George Hamilton to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th September, with regard to Koweit affairs, and to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that his Lordship concurs in the Marquess of Salisbury's proposal to approve the language held by Sir N. O'Connor to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs and to Anthopoulo Pasha, as reported in his despatches Nos. 440 and 442 of the 13th and 14th September.

I am, &c.
(Signed) HORACE WALPOLE.

No. 126.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 229.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 7, 1899.

I HAVE received your despatches Nos. 440 and 442 of the 13th and 14th ultimo, reporting conversations which you have had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and with Anthopoulo Pasha on the subject of Koweit.

The language held by your Excellency on these occasions is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 127.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 474. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, October 5, 1899.

ACCORDING to telegram received yesterday from Her Majesty's Consul at Basrah, Turkish Consul at Bushire reported last week to the Vali of Basrah that the Sheikh of Koweit recently applied through the Sheikh of Mohammerah to be taken

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under Persian protection, but that his application was rejected on being referred to Tehran.

Her Majesty's Consul at Basrah states that, though he at first doubted the accuracy of this intelligence, it has since been corroborated.

I am sending copy of this despatch to Tehran.

I have, &c.
[Unsigned.]

No. 128.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 478. Secret.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, October 12, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 474 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, confirming the receipt by the Vali of instructions for the appointment of a Harbour-master at Koweit.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 128.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 39. Secret.)

Sir,

Bussorah, August 23, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to confirm my cypher telegram of to-day to your Excellency, reporting the receipt by Hamdi Pasha of instructions from the Porte to appoint a Harbour-master at Koweit. I am informed that his Excellency wrote yesterday to the Sheikh on the subject.

There is already a "Préposé" of the Sanitary Board at Koweit, but his office is a sinecure. However, his mere presence was an outward and visible sign of the Sultan's claim to suzerainty over the place, which the appointment of a Harbour-master would emphasize considerably.

I inquired of the Vali last week whether any progress was being made towards a settlement of the Koweit succession question, and he replied that he could get no further with it on account of the obstinacy of Sheikh Mubarek.

His Excellency declares that he has received no reply from Constantinople to his Report, mentioned in my despatch No. 27 of the 3rd June to your Excellency.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 129.

Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.—(Received at the Foreign Office, November 6.)

(No. 46. Secret.)

Sir,

Bussorah, October 2, 1899.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 45 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to report that there appears to be truth in the story of Sheikh Mubarek's application for Persian protection, which I was at first inclined to discredit.

The Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Lapwing," now in port, informs me that when he called at Bahrain, on his way to Bussorah, he was told by the British Agent there that Mubarek had written to him to say that he had no great confidence in the efficacy of our support, and, knowing that the Turks were hostile to him, he had applied, through the Sheikh of Mohomerah, to be taken under the wing of the Shah.

* Inclosure in No. 95.

The Vali has telegraphically reported the incident to Constantinople, and has written to the Sheikh of Mohomerah to inquire as to the truth of the story.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 130.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received November 13.)

(No. 516. Secret.)

My Lord,

Therapia, November 6, 1899.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 474 of the 5th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a Secret despatch addressed to me on the 30th September by Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, referring to his telegram relative to the rumoured application of the Sheikh of Koweit for Persian protection, and reporting upon other matters connected with the position of affairs at Koweit.

As regards the alleged application of Sheikh Mubarek, Mr. Wratislaw states that he considers the story improbable; but it was officially related to the Vali of Bussorah by the Turkish Vice-Consul at Bushire. In a subsequent telegram from Mr. Wratislaw (see my despatch No. 474) he states that it has since received corroboration.

A copy of Mr. Wratislaw's preceding despatch (No. 44, Secret, of the 16th September) is likewise inclosed, reporting the visit of Her Majesty's ship "Sphinx" to Bussorah on her way back from Koweit to Bushire, and giving further information as to the relations between Sheikh Mubarek and the Vali of Bussorah. In this despatch Her Majesty's Consul expresses surprise at the mission of Her Majesty's ship "Sphinx" to Koweit, which seemed to him uncalled for in the absence of any good reason to anticipate an impending attack on that place.

I am reminding him in my reply of his telegrams of the 25th August and 7th September respectively, which give the information upon which Her Majesty's Government were led to think it desirable that the British flag should be shown at Koweit. In the first of these telegrams Mr. Wratislaw reported the dispatch of a harbour-master to Koweit, adding that there was a rumoured intention of likewise setting up an Ottoman Custom-house there, and in the second I was informed that the harbour-master had returned to Bussorah, and that the military authorities were strongly advocating the effective occupation of Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONNOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 130.

Vice-Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 45. Secret.)

Sir,

Bussorah, September 30, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to report that by last mail Hamdi Pasha received a despatch from the Turkish Vice-Consul at Bushire, in which the latter stated, on the authority of "high Persian officials," that Sheikh Mubarek of Koweit had recently requested the Sheikh of Mohomerah to apply in his name to the Persian Government for Persian protection, and that this application had been referred to Tehran, and rejected by the Shah.

The Vice-Consul naturally attributed this incident to British intrigues.

The above story appears highly improbable, but as it has formed the subject of an official Report, which will doubtless be passed on to Constantinople, I have thought right to submit it to your Excellency.

Last week, a clerk (Ottoman subject) in the employ of Messrs. Hotz, Hamilton, and Co., was called before the Vali and told that his Excellency had been informed that he was in the habit of giving information to "English persons" concerning the movements of

Turkish troops, and what was passing at Koweit and elsewhere. He was warned that if the Vali heard such a report again he would be expelled from Bussorah.

There is, I believe, no truth whatever in the accusation brought against the clerk, who is not in a position to supply information, and with whom I at least have had no communication, direct or indirect. He has probably been traduced by an enemy, but the incident shows the uneasiness of the Turkish authorities.

The military party mentioned in my telegram No. 4 of the 22nd September returned to Bussorah after a short absence. No progress has been made with the Harbour-master question, so far as I know.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 130.

Vice-Consul Wratislaw to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 44. Secret.)

Sir,

Bussorah, September 16, 1899.

AS I have already had the honour to inform your Excellency by telegram, I received on the 15th instant a private letter dated the 11th September, from Captain Prideaux, Acting Consul-General at Bushire, stating that he had been suddenly ordered off to Koweit in Her Majesty's ship "Sphinx," which was to prevent any attack on the place by the Turks. As Captain Prideaux informed me that he was to keep in telegraphic communication with me and that the "Sphinx" would call at Fao, and as further I was aware that he would not be allowed to correspond with me by cypher within Turkish territory, I thought it better to proceed to Fao myself, which I did, arriving there early on the morning of the 14th instant. I waited till night, but the "Sphinx" did not arrive, and Captain Hore, I.M.S., whom Captain Prideaux had left in charge of the Consulate-General, was not able to give me any further information respecting the expedition of the "Sphinx" except that some apprehension was caused by the movements of a Turkish gun-boat.

To-day the "Sphinx" called here on her way back to Bushire, and I learned from Captain Prideaux that nothing abnormal was occurring at Koweit and that Sheikh Mubarek was under no apprehension.

I am at a loss to understand from whence the Indian Government can have obtained information that an immediate attack on Koweit, necessitating a counter-move, was meditated by the Turks. It can hardly have been from my reports, which, I venture to submit, should be trusted rather than those of irresponsible informants.

A military expedition on the scale required for the occupation of Koweit, could hardly be organized with such secrecy that no news of it would reach this Consulate. The sea-going squadron maintained by the Turks in these waters consists solely of one gun-boat of 800 tons, the "Zohaf," now anchored off Bussorah and shortly to return to her station on the Arab coast of the Persian Gulf which she recently left without permission under circumstances already reported to your Excellency. Her late consort, the "Seyad-i-deira," a tiny vessel apparently of some 200 tons left Bussorah on the 4th instant, to endeavour to convey to Constantinople the time-expired Turkish sailors of the "Zohaf," and I presume it was her movements that gave rise to fears for the safety of Koweit.

There appears to be some friction at present between the Vali and Mouhsin Pasha, the Ferik in command of the troops here, for the former to-day sent me a message through my Dragoman to the effect that Mouhsin was unjustly blaming him for not having given Mubarek notice of his intention to send a harbour-master to Koweit. His Excellency said that he did not send off his functionary till twelve days after receipt of instructions from the Minister of Marine, which instructions he immediately referred to the Grand Vizier who, however, vouchsafed no reply. Sheikh Mubarek, backed up by the Nakib's family, had telegraphed to the Porte to complain of him (Hamdi) and it was evident from the Sheikh's present arrogant attitude that he had entered into an agreement with some powerful Government, presumably the British, through the Bushire Residency.

I am informed, but I cannot vouch for the truth of the report, that Mouhsin Pasha

has accepted a heavy bribe from Mubarek. I am also informed that in his telegram to the Sultan concerning the harbour-master, Sheikh Mubarek declared that he was His Imperial Majesty's loyal subject and ready to execute his orders provided they were communicated direct and not through the Vali, whom he did not consider as his official superior.

With regard to the succession question, Hamdi Pasha has instructed the legal adviser of the nephews to show himself more conciliatory and to endeavour to effect an arrangement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 131.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 24.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord George Hamilton, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosure in Government of India Foreign Secretary's letter, dated the 26th October, respecting Koweit affairs.

India Office, November 23, 1899.

Inclosure in No. 131.

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to the Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Bushire, October 1, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Government of India, that on receipt of your telegraphic instructions of the 10th September last, I requested Commander H. A. Phillips, commanding Her Majesty's ship "Sphinx," to proceed to Koweit, taking Lieutenant P. B. Prideaux, my first assistant. The Admiralty had also sent orders direct to Commander Phillips who was instructed to protect the Sheikh, if necessary, from attacks by the Turks.

2. The "Sphinx" left Bushire on the evening of the 11th and arrived at Koweit at daybreak on the 13th. Commander Phillips and Mr. Prideaux had two interviews with Sheikh Mubarek, who informed them that he had no intimation of an intended attack by the Turks, that he could prevent their making it on the land side, and would communicate at once with the British authorities at Bushire if any attempt is made by sea. He added that he would never agree to the establishment of a Turkish custom-house at Koweit, or tolerate the presence of a Harbour-master sent by the Turkish authorities.

3. Everything being quiet at Koweit, the "Sphinx" left for Fao on the 14th ultimo, and then proceeded to Bussorah, when Mr. Prideaux had some conversation with Mr. Wratislaw, the Consul, who expressed his regret and surprise that the "Sphinx" had gone to Koweit in the face of an opinion expressed by him in a telegram to the Ambassador sent on the 8th ultimo. In this telegram, Mr. Wratislaw stated that he did not think any active steps were in contemplation for the present, and if it had reached the Government of India sooner, the dispatch of the gun-boat to Koweit would no doubt have been deferred. I did not, however, see a copy of the message in question sent by Mr. Wratislaw to Lieutenant Prideaux till after my return to Bushire on the 18th ultimo, and, though it reached Lieutenant Prideaux by mail-steamer before he started, he was unable to communicate it to me, as I left Kurrachee, at daybreak on the 11th. Lieutenant Prideaux did not feel justified in delaying his departure on the score of Mr. Wratislaw's message to the Ambassador, especially as the Commander of the "Sphinx," to whom he showed it, declared that he must carry out the orders he had received from the Admiral, and intended going on unless they were countermanded.

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4. I have referred to this matter at some length, as Mr. Wratislaw considers that the visit of the "Sphinx" to Koweit at the present juncture may make the Turks more suspicious, and may also have the effect of making Sheikh Mubarik more aggressive in his attitude towards the Ottoman authorities. I am inclined, however, to hope that no bad effect will result from the incident, which may, on the contrary, have the effect of showing the Turks that we are on the look-out for any movements with Koweit as their objective, and this may prevent anything of the sort being attempted.

5. Mr. Wratislaw is of opinion that nothing will be done, at any rate for some time to come, and he promises to keep me fully informed of any preparations that may be made at Bassorah. He is confident that it will not be possible for the Turks to arrange for the dispatch of the force which would be necessary for such an undertaking without his hearing of the preparations which would have to be made, and I think, therefore, that we are sure to hear beforehand of any serious attempt on the part of the Turks to establish an effective military occupation of Koweit.

6. Mr. Wratislaw informs me that the Wali has agreed to his telegraphing to me in cypher, which has hitherto not been allowed, via the Turkish telegraph lines. I think, however, that if anything serious is really taking place, cypher messages will be impounded, and that it will be safer to send them by other means than along the wires to Bas, from which the clerk in charge can always be depended on to forward them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) M. J. MEADE.